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## CHIP,



## THE CAVE-CHILD.

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CHIP.

THE

CAVE-CHILD.

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BY MRS. MARY A. DENNISON.

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NEW YORK: 118 WILLIAM STREET  
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# CHIP, THE CAVE-CHILD,

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE GRAVE — THE TAVERN KITCHEN.

“CHIP! Chip, I say! come here, Chip!”

An Indian woman, tall and gray, sat on a wooded height in the midst of a narrow clearing. The grand hills inclosing one of the most enchanting valley spots in Pennsylvania, rose abruptly on every side, crowned to the summit with lofty trees. It was a wild, high solitude, untrodden by the foot of enterprise. The moss had crept up the trunks of the old oaks whose years had seen generations pass away, and here and there the red berries of the mountain-ash gleamed jewel-like through a more somber foliage. Peak after peak, with clouds sailing grandly, like great ships, freighted with dew, down their green channels, the mountains lifted their brows bare to the sun.

Oh! what a glorious sight it was, to one standing there far above the level of common life, watching the crimsoned day departing. But not of this thought the wild, haggish woman who, out of rude materials, and with ruder implements, was carving what appeared to be a head-stone for a little grave. The clearing, with the exception of a narrow path opening down the hill to the westward, was heavily inclosed with oaks and maples. To the right was the mouth of a cave, thick set with scraggy bushes, whose rocky projections, covered with moss and furze, struck sharply out from the surrounding greenness. The woman was a picture in herself. She had an Indian face, furrowed with grief or passion. Her cheeks were hollow, giving an unnatural prominence to the bones under the eyes. Startlingly black, the iris of her eye seemed sometime swimming in fire, for the ball was crossed with red streaks. Her long, ebon locks were partly gathered up, partly falling upon her broad, gaunt shoulders. Her forehead was high, narrow, and seamed with many lines; her lips wore a fierceness in their compressed muscles that seemed ever ready to spring out and fasten upon an enemy; and just now she seemed to have fallen into a tigerish mood peculiar to her whenever overcome by any strong emotion. Her dress was of some dark and stiff texture, very scant, badly made, and not very cleanly. Her complexion was the tawny, olive-cast of an Indian.



"Chip! Chip, I say!" she cried again, suspending her work and bending toward the opening of the cave; "come here, child — better come quick."

By this time, a child, with a face of unearthly whiteness, bleached by the absence of sun and light, appeared at the aperture. Her neck was of such tenuity that it looked like a reed, and her little hands and arms were thin and almost unnaturally long. Her yellow hair was so extremely fine and free from moisture, that it hung about her like spray goldened by the sun. Energy, expression, life itself seemed void in her diminutive face. She looked like a bulb dug up from the earth before it has put out a single shoot of vitality. Her large, lack luster eyes floated loosely in wide, hollow sockets, and her fine brows beautifully curved, lifted uneasily as the imperious voice of the old woman ceased.

"Come here and see what I'm making," said the latter, harshly, and the child drew near; "do you see? it's a tombstone."

"A tombstone," repeated the child, mechanically; not with the eagerness of inquiry.

"Yes, a tombstone; and you poor little fool, if you could read, you'd see your own name upon it — Chip Nobody, aged eleven."

The child gave a most unchildish sigh, and looked steadily at the old woman, though the look was that of a somnambulist dreaming of unreal things.

"Now," said the old woman, garrulously, "I'm going to make believe you are dead and buried. I'm going to put you in that hole, see;" and she pointed to a cavity she had made, which was the receptacle of a queer-looking bag filled with bones; "now, that's you," she added, with a wild laugh — "remember, you're dead and gone to dust, and now I shall cover you up. There!" she exclaimed, stamping upon the little mound with a gesture almost of fury, "I've put it over you — put the mold of an accursed race upon your bones, and there you will lie; and *he* shall see it and howl, while you will be *worse* than dead." Then, changing her manner, she said, assuming a look of fear, "There, are the flaming eyes! run, Chip, run!"

Before the words were scarcely uttered, the child fled with a shriek of terror that echoed among the hill-tops, and the old woman, with a mocking laugh, bent down to place the headstone over the apparent grave. This done, she glanced about uneasily, muttering, "The storm is coming; the breath of the evening is warm close to the ground — the sky is copper-colored where the sun is going down, the swallows fly in among the tops of the trees in the valley — the white moon is in a ring; it will rain, hail, blow, and destroy. I will set out on my journey, or this young one will starve." So saying, she stooped down to the aperture, entered, drew the bushes close, and disappeared.

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A great pitch-pine fire roared upon the hearth, making the shadows on the walls dance with a wild, jubilant motion. It was an old



tim' tavern kitchen, the counterparts of which are seldom met with, save in some of the back settlements of Pennsylvania. All its smoky timbers and gigantic beams blushed a tawny red, illuminated by the cheery fire; and the faces of sundry travelers seated around the great hearth-stone glowed in the rich light. Most of the men were farmers and teamsters from the neighboring towns on their way home; their countenances were indicative of cheerful tempers, but gross feeling and low intellectuality. Before them stood a small round table, plentifully garnished with mugs of home-brewed beer, and flanked by a clayey-brown pitcher nearly empty. Without, the gusty wind ran shivering through the trees, hurtling itself against the small-paned casements, catching at shutters, and puffing occasionally down the broad mouthed chimney, sending curling clouds of smoke before it. Now it moaned like an old man who sinks in the waters, struggling no longer; now its shrieks were shriller than the eagle's cry and anon it sobbed like an infant in a troubled dream. It rained dismally, as it had rained all day, and the comfort-loving occupants of the old kitchen hugged themselves with pleasure as they thought of food, warmth, and their security from the tempest. The room was very long and low, and the gleam of the fire, intercepted by the shaggy backwoodsmen, did not reach the entire range, consequently the back part was in dim obscurity; but had one peered closely through the darkness, he would have seen the form of a boy, crouched in a low seat, and drowsing, for his head rested on his folded arms that he had gathered about his knees; he seemed coaxing himself to be warm and comfortable.

"Well, I s'pose we shall have to be making tracks here, putty soon," said a long, lank personage, whose attitude resembled that of an interrogation point, and as he spoke he ran his fingers through a shock of yellow hair. "As for me," he continued, "I be durned hungry — bean't you, Jeemes?"

"Certain I am," responded a thick-set man with watery eyes and a nose hooked like the beak of a parrot. "I've rid a matter of thirty miles since twal, and my innards rattle like a dice box. Now, boys, stir your stumps, for here comes Masty, short and crusty as ever, I'll be boun'."

A door opened in the center of the kitchen wall, admitting a dumpy figure with heavy, scarlet arms, bare to the elbow. A huge tea-kettle swung from one broad hand, and from the other dangled an old fashioned toasting-fork. Going directly up toward the curled figure of the boy, she touched him lightly with her foot, exclaiming, "Here, stupid, time you was stirring — laying about here; these men wants their supper, and so, for that matter, do I myself. Go lay on the cloth and the dishes, an be spry about it, or mind your ears'll sting for 't."

"Hi! Masty, you shall have a husband when you're married, my smart girl," said a stout teamster, lighting his blackened pipe, and gazing at her with something of admiration through the smoke that followed his efforts.



"I'll be thankful then if I don't get such a loon as you," responded the girl, saucily, jerking the heavy kettle to the center of the crane, the water spouting out and sending little jets of steam in her face.

"Whoa!" cried the teamster, "the bit chafes."

"Does it?" replied Mastina, innocently, turning about, "let me see your tongue, and if it's blistered, I'll put a plaster on it."

"Ho, ho, ha ha!" rang out from the coarse company. The teamster's face grew red, and he took his pipe angrily from his mouth, when the parrot-nose struck him on the knee, saying, "Look here, man, save your wit; she's one too many for you; you'll get worsted if you try it with Masty's here; we've all given her up, long ago; she's got the vocabulary, as the parson says, on her tongue's end; so hush, man — take your lashing quietly."

Meanwhile, Masty worked away, raking the glowing coals to the center of the hearth, heaping them to the great ash-log. "Here, Nick," she cried to the boy, who was busy at the table, "bring me the split bread out of the pantry."

The boy came hurrying along with a heaping trayful. Mastina inserted one of the thick wheaten slices in the aperture of the fork saying, as she turned away —

"Here, you man that got *bit* so badly, see that toast doesn't brown too much," and giving him a laughing, roguish glance out of her bright eyes, she left the circle, saying, "now I've given you a *bit* of my tongue, I'll give you another kind of tongue for supper, something that'll be *neater*."

Again the men laughed out, and Mastina, flew now in, now out of the circle at the fire, her ready wit showering on all sides, her stout, short arms flashing about like the crimson wings of an industrious flamingo. The table was soon set with substantial fare, and Nick had gone back to his old position. At the ringing of the bell for supper, two persons came from the little parlor — a young, slender youth, and a gaunt, pale Quaker fellow-traveler, yet strangers to each other. The latter had his long locks combed smoothly behind his ears, where they rested on the straight collar of his Quaker coat. If nobility of character, integrity of heart, and great resolution combined with a singular simplicity that was almost childlike, were ever delineated by one feature of the human face divine, they were mapped out by the broad, yet not prominent brow of the Quaker preacher. He was in reality an embodiment of his profession, plain, stern, quiet — yet his gravity was tempered with a sweet smile, and his voice was exceedingly beautiful.

Still fell the rain in torrents, and blew the wind with a tempest violent, but, just as the travelers had seated themselves at the table, there came a lull, and a soft, sweet sound like a lute, or a rich organ-note, was distinctly heard outside the old inn. The men looked at one another, and Mastina, with whom the sound appeared familiar, laughed a little, exclaiming —

"She's out earlier than usual to-night."







"Oh! you jest hush, gal, I reckon I kin tell my own story," replied the teamster.

"We all knew you're a story teller," retorted the girl, "that's the reason people find it so hard to believe what you say -- but I ain't mind my jerking you off. What did the swamp do after running its two miles?"

While the farmers were laughing at this sally, and at the disconcerted looks of the teamster, a cold, damp wind swept through the room, and the cheery voice of the little landlord was heard vociferating,

"Walk in, sir, walk right in; an awful night, yes, *that* you may say, sir -- warm fire here, though, first-rate accommodations for man, not to say beast," cried the fat little landlord, rubbing his hands as he ushered in a tall, splendid figure wrapped in a heavy cloak; and with a great deal more noise and pomp than was agreeable to his plainer guests, and a great deal more parade than was acceptable to the stranger, he placed a chair by the blazing hearth, and then edged about him, rubbing his hands and bobbing his little bullet-head as he enumerated the delicacies and comforts of his hostelry.

"Have any thing you'll be pleased to call for, sir -- chicken, ham, tongue, salmon -- there is pickled eels, there is corn beef -- there is -- Mastina, my good girl, what is there we *hain't* got?" he asked, turning pompously, still rubbing his hands, toward the fall table.

"We hain't any boiled baby, sir," replied the girl readily, causing a tittering from one end of the table to the other.

"What!" exclaimed the landlord, his little red eyes protruding, while the stranger, as he turned his head suddenly to see from whence came this quick reply, displayed a smile on a dark, singular face, irregular in feature, but still eminently handsome when not in repose.

"You asked me what we *didn't* have in the house, and I can't think of any thing *but* a boiled baby, as we've got most every thing else," replied Mastina, demurely.

"He, he, put to her wits you see, house is so full; every thing *but* boiled baby -- he, he. Have supper here, sir, or in a private room -- warmer here, sir -- take some time to get the chill off -- can set you a separate table just here by the fire, sir."

"That will do," replied the stranger, in a low tone -- "Look here landlord, have a good fire prepared, and my chamber well heated, for I shall want to retire soon; these chilling August storms coming before their time have given me an effectual shake," and he drew his cloak closer and shivered.

"Of course you'll have something *hot* right off," said the discomfited little landlord -- "Nick, mix some hot brandy and water for this gentleman."

"No, no, if you please; I never drink brandy; give me a little ginger in some hot water -- that will do."



• You hear the gentleman, Nick;” as the boy turned to go, the stranger bent an inquiring gaze upon him.

“A poor-house boy, sir — took him out of Williamsport poor-house — a peart little fellow — when I lost my negro Sam; but since then, sir, I think he’s a little gin out — don’t seem so smart and handy — thinks too much — sets still like a stick or stone, mostly — **a strange young ’un, sir.**”

The traveler said nothing, but with a keen, almost painfully fixed glance, eyed the meagerly clad child now coming toward him with a little tray and a steam-covered tumbler. The boy was thin, and his clothes merely hung together. His complexion was dark, his features regular, with a softness of outline that blended well with the wavy, uncurled hair that hung over his gray eyes. He bore the stranger’s glance with composure, even returned it with equal interest, and then fell back from the fire, as if it were an unaccustomed or forbidden indulgence to warm his poor limbs by such grateful embers. Meanwhile, the stranger drank leisurely, pressing his pale lips together after he had drained the tumbler, and knitting his brows as if lost in painful reflection; and Nick receiving orders to make a fire in the large chamber, walked slowly away with the tray and empty tumbler. When the farmers and hearty yeomen had finished their supper, they drew up again to the fire, this time making a wide circle. For some moments, restraint, caused by the new presence, kept them silent, and the stranger’s eyes, after scanning quickly the sun-browned faces, lingered with a longer glance upon the fair young face of Park Dinsmore, finding that refinement in countenance, and grace in bearing, that made him wonder how he became mixed in with the rest. The Quaker preacher, not finding the company congenial, had gone to his own room.

Mastina, who was not a servant but a half sister of the landlord, quietly replaced the well-cleared table with finer linen and better fare, then drawing forward a seat she beckoned the stranger to partake, and poured out the tea, scanning his face with good-natured assurance.

“Now, I reckon you’ll tell that story about the cave-child,” exclaimed one of the yeomen, lazily stretching his feet nearer the fire.

At this query the stranger betrayed a startled mien, dropping his spoon, and partly turning his head to listen with more intentness; but apparently controlling himself he resumed his spoon, and with an abstracted manner dismissed the viands placed before him, drank, or rather swallowed at a gulp his cup of tea, his hand trembling as he placed it back — and then complaining of diminished appetite, he arose from the table, and with as careless an air and expression as he could assume, seated himself in the midst of the little company, just as the turnster was saying, “It’s a mighty dismal place that part of the country, and there ain’t but one pair of feet, I reckon, that knows the way to tramp to it.”

Nick, who sat a little back in the gloom, looked up with a quick intelligence lighting his features instant with cunning, and making a rapid movement with his fingers, snipped them in the air.







ter, I never knew: most likely she felt, as such poor unfortunate's generally do; but our *g'ld' lady* — I'd like to whack him with my last whip — got married to a certain young lady, they say, and in less than a year they had a little daughter. Well —" here he cleared his throat, then he moved more squarely toward the fire, drew a long pipe and yellow hairkerchief from the breast-pocket of his shaggy brown jacket, applied it vigorously to his nose, shook himself back in overgrinding, and glancing carelessly toward the stranger, resumed the story with an air of importance.

"Now you see, this Mother Kinstegan wants to have her revenge. Who wrongs her? If a child is stolen, (for if her virtue be gone — which is likely) and the time comes for me to make 'em sting who wrongs me — who's to blame? It's true," he added, with an oracular shake of the head, "the good book says, leave all such things to Him who governs, but then He used to govern the people so't they stood to a certain extent that I'd sich things. But that ain't nothing here nor there; I ain't no Christian; I doesn't pretend to be a Christian in the sense I take sich things."

The stranger still sat motionless, shading his forehead and eyes from the red heat; now he spoke abruptly, and his lips scarcely moved as he said — "Finish your story, my friend, it has interested me."

"I was going on to say," resumed the teamster, "that the old woman watched her chance and stole a child. I don't know in course whether she stole, but I can guess, and it's reasonable enough to reason that it was one that would be mighty useful. She took it to some cave among the hills here — where, nobody knows; and how the child came forth, the Lord only knows, for no human eye that I know of has seen the old fortune-teller's cave-entrance. It's my opinion, and I ain't alone, goes being what a witch she is for telling things that come to pass, that the old one helps her, for I've tried none'n a dozen times, in a dozen different places, to keep my footing in that wet woods, and the trail is almost lost deep, wherever I've been."

"That old man is sick," said the young man, Park Dismore, springing from his seat.

The stranger did indeed tremble from head to foot, but he controlled his emotion, wherever he caused it, and moving his chair a little back, said —

"The heat is quite oppressive;" then added, friendly, and in a voice whose sternness was assumed, "you say the child really died?"

"I can't say," exclaimed the paragon, eager for a share of the notice monopolized by his garrulous friend, "I lost it; who's to tell? Old Mother Kinstegan says so — but sometimes she says she's fool herself — there's no use in losing her."

"Why have not the proper authorities seen into this matter?" demanded the stranger, sternly; "stand on your feet, to let a poor innocent babe be murdered in the backwoods."

"What a queer fellow I live to see the day!" asked the other; "and as to the authorities, they are as much afraid of old Mother Kinstegan as they are of the old master, the devil. It's a



"What thing do you say, sir, do you think it any worse to steal a child, than to deceive a woman?"

The question was fairly put, but before the stranger's question would allow him to answer, some one said —

"Hark! hark! old Mother Knottgan herself. Come, stern, come witch — now, boys, for fun!"

A stamping, and a shrill, sharp voice, like the rattle of a leaf, and the jingle of a silver button, were heard on the side door. The stranger rose with a gallant manner, and he asked Nick to show him to his room. It was not noted how rattling were his steps, nor how haggard and white his face had grown; all were looking anxiously for the appearance of the wretched woman whose claims had monopolized the evening's conversation.

The boy, with a lantern light in one hand, led the way through a long entry, of rows of closed doors, and a step, and a quick flight of stairs, along the wall of a smaller passage, the stranger in one still manner that directed to the right, and having fastened on the lock, threw open the door. The chamber seemed a rooming wood fire, and its light came from the play of the white walls and white hangings of the highest quality, and the now cooled room a home-like aspect, and the air the room as fresh, and the room sent its warm breath against the fire's power, the cheerful light and warmth of the fire, and the power of contrast.

"This will do," murmured the stranger, surveying the matting floor, the wide fireplace, the open door, and the room's ornaments of cracked and broken china; "I love the lamp, boy, and hold this portmanteau, while I unlock it."

Nick did as he was told, looking anxiously into the stranger's face while he passed the key to the lock. The latter stood, his chest half-swung round his slowly moving figure, and he looked at him; but as it suddenly recalled his hand, he put the key to the lock, opened it, threw down the portmanteau, and continued again the study of the boy's features.

"What is your name?" he asked at length, folding his arms over his chest.

"Nick, sir," said the boy, humbly.

"Well, and what else?"

"To be sure, they call me sometimes, sir. I has no other name."

"How old are you, Nick?"

"Don't know, sir."

"Where were you born?"

"I don't know, sir; I wasn't there," replied the boy innocently; "I guess a body don't know; unless they say I was left there in a basket."

"Left where?"

"In the parish workhouse, sir; that's where the master took me from."

"So, you don't know any thing about yourself?" repeated the man.



"No, sir, only here I be," said the boy with a quick intimation.

"How long do these storms last in this part of the country? Put your hair back — so; now, look me in the face; how long did you say?"

"Sometimes two days or so; sometimes a week; then a peace of days of folks," repeated the boy.

"And has this old woman with" — the boy turned and pointed eagerly toward the door, "as many troubles as you say?"

The stranger had allowed his white beard to fall over his forehead, and resting his head on one hand, sat like a king on a throne of the cares of state.

"Yes, Mother Kurtsgun comes in the rain always; she never goes off other times, cause somebody'll maybe find her old here."

"Did you?" — the stranger gasped, and his eyes grew tall, and his brow flushed till the veins stood out, and then, after a very little pause, he ventured again — "did you come to the place where they were speaking of?"

"Oh, yes, I used to, sometimes, till she died; you see, I met her once, and was almost starved, and old Mother Kurtsgun found me and kept me ever so long."

"How did she look, my boy?"

"She was pale; she was a little bit of a thing," replied the boy; "me and old Mother Kurtsgun is the only ones who knows how to get through that place — don't think my place is a place of sickness."

"Will you go there for me, my boy?"

Nick cowered, and his face changed.

"I wouldn't dare!" he said, in a tremulous whisper; "what for? why? she'd turn me into an eagle or a wolf, she'd dare that to do many a time."

"Fool!" muttered the man. Then, suddenly, his countenance changed, and in a harsh voice he said, "I'll go with you. I'll give you gold; see here!" and he pulled out a handful of silver coins, and rattled them before the eyes of the boy; "will you go for these?"

"I larn't — inlee, — dare't! old Mother Kunst is powerful wicked, she'd kill me to end," cried the boy, "I wouldn't go for all the money in the world!"

Laughter and laughter, vying with the great gusts without, rolled up the shouts of laughter from the kitchen.

"Stop," said the stranger, as Nick was crawling back into his wonted position; "the old woman tells stories, don't you?"

"Yes, great ones," replied the boy; "they ones are a warn — I guess she be, too."

"Well, go down and say to her that a person who wants her to tell him his fortune; and show her this," and he thrust a gold piece into the boy's hand.

Nick departed with alacrity; he could not remember a moment in the presence of this man. The stranger was left alone with his own thoughts, which, to judge by the expression of his countenance,







"SHALL I?" cried the old woman, accepting the silver, while the red hair gave her face an expression of unusual beauty. "well, then, in the first place, your wife will be lame in one leg, withered in one hand, blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, and have a tongue that will measure you for your coffin."

A shiver of lightning followed the black darkness of the night.

"She shall be sick half two weeks in the year," added the Indian, looking round with an air of triumph, "and I shall be your constant companion, for you must wait for me, sitting and rising, and when I bid you to do a thing or to eat of tar if you don't do what ever she tells you to."

"Hush! hush!" cried the tempter, clapping his hands.

"And you," cried the old woman, turning suddenly toward him, "will go further and fare worse."

"Oh, now, Mother Kurstegin," said the tempter, with a look of real disappointment, "you said I should have Mary only a week ago!"

"Did I? well — hush! if you can get her, so you may," replied the tempter, nodding her head to the tree.

"Mother Kurstegin has got something on her mind," said an old hunter, with a shock of gray hair and a worn brow, as he passed the tobacco into a long pipe; "she used to do nothing but eat and drink, but she's changed her temper, and it's not what it was once, and she won't say a word of herself as she used to do."

"My Mary!" cried the old woman, with downy eyes and a changed voice; "hush! hush! you don't say of you know what it is to have burnt up your brain as with red-hot iron, so that even the waters of all the rivers can't wash out. I'm a broken old woman!" she added, in a whisper, looking down.

Paul Peterson turned with new interest to the old woman, and she eagerly put his story, for she never forgot a word of his tale, and, with a sudden animation, exclaimed:

"By, I will read your destiny; come nearer;" then, raising her sunken and snowy hand to her forehead to shade her eyes, she took his, and scanned the palm intently.

"For him that respects old age," she said, solemnly, and in a low tone, "whether rain or velvet, whether with the crown of a king or the head of the beggar's cup, I would, if in my power, send nothing important — yes, young man, that is important, comes in your destiny."

"I'll hear you bravely, mother," replied the frightened youth, smiling as he spoke.

"Ay! that's well," she answered, but with such a look of anxiety as would rather have made him tremble than smile; "I'll tell you a story that is truly the story of Mary, Mother of Jesus, and of the king of his own mother, who wear his crown like a man, and I'll tell you how I came to a forest where you were killed a week ago," she paused for a moment, as if mastering some important memory;



"you have crossed mountains and rivers and seas — you have been in danger many a time, and will be again."

"Just so, mother," said the youth, looking all the astonishment the correctness of her language called forth.

"There's a high house on a hill," she continued, "gazing down upon meadows and fields, and far away from any suspicion. And I see you there, after the trouble is over, happy, rich, and contented. And I see by your side a young wife — far you would scorn to be lower the lowliest woman," she almost shouted, raising one hand to her head in a frenzied way — but, calming herself, she continued, "and she has the brightest gold-brown hair, and the sweetest brown eyes and the reddest cheeks I ever saw. Ay, she's a pretty young creature, and she has seen sorrow, too. And there are three little children, one a beautiful baby — there isn't that man nor woman would do you the harm to wish a black wish to that sweet little baby — but I've known, ah, I've known what I won't tell you;" she paused, holding up one skinny forefinger, while in the hall the soft, solemn strain of the storm came floating by. The farmers looked at one another and shrugged their shoulders. At that moment Misty came in, with her hands full of eatables, which she set on the table, saying,

"Here, Mother Kurstegan, ain't you hungry after your big tramp? Come and eat something."

While the old woman devoured the food, keeping up a running fire of wit with Misty (for she seemed to have the faculty of adapting her language to the company she was in), the men hid their heads together, and presently, as the old woman came toward the fire again, one of them cried out,

"Say, Mother Kurstegan, is that cave-child really dead?"

"Well, yes, the storm has been mighty powerful up our way," replied the old woman, with readiness, indifferently holding her hands toward the fire; "did you say you was afraid?"

A loud laugh followed.

"You don't git round us that way, old lady," said the Pennsylvania teamster; "we've heard stories as how the gal was living yet, and by jingo! it's a mighty mean shame to keep a little gal in house that 'ere way, any how!"

"If you ever speak of that to me again," shouted the old woman, turning so fiercely upon the teamster that he pushed his chair from the hearth, "I'll tell the company which of your relations got hung."

"And I'll tell which of yours ought to be," replied the teamster, his temper flashing up in his face, "and she ain't far from it, either."

The Indian woman, with an unexpected and vigorous blow, sent the man backward, chair and all; and the teamster lay half-dead, rolling over in his effort to regain his balance. As he slowly arose, with a face of ashy whiteness, shout after shout of laughter made the rafters of the old room ring again. Fortunately, at this moment, Nick



came with the message from above stairs, and while Misty, laughing till the tears ran down her cheeks, brushed the sand from the teamster's back, the old woman, dragging her wet garments after her, trailed her way out of the kitchen.

Nick, not well aware whether he did right or wrong, followed at a safe distance up the stairs, but she tramped rapidly as if she knew the way by heart, and shot into the chamber, shutting the door behind her. The boy crouched down close by the threshold, wondering what the stranger could possibly want of old Mother Kurstegan. Meanwhile, as the evening was waning toward midnight, the men dispersed to their beds, and Mastina raked up the fire in the kitchen.

As the Indian bell-time entered the room where sat the stranger, and which was now lighted only by one flickering flame, she advanced to the fireplace, and stood with folded hands, looking uneasily about her. The candle had been extinguished, and its unsavory smell filled the room; the high blaze had evidently been smothered with water, for the ashes were blown about the hearth as if by a sudden concussion. The stranger still sat in the great arm-chair, his cloak about his shoulders, a dark silk handkerchief bound over his temples, his face resting on his left hand.

"They say you tell fortunes, good woman," he said, lifting his eyes uneasily, and letting them fall again, while his lips locked together with such pressure that their outline was almost lost. At the sound of his voice the woman turned her head slightly, and it was fully a moment before she answered.

"Yes, I tell fortunes when there is any fortune to tell; but sometimes those that hear me wish that I had held my tongue;" she said coldly.

"I sent for you to tell mine, and if you hit the truth in any thing you say, I will give you a gold piece."

"Let me see your hand," said the woman, coming close to him — then as she took it she dropped it, and said, "that's the hand of a man that's seen a mighty sight of trouble — and," she added in a lower tone — "done a mighty deal of harm."

"Go on," he said, coldly.

The woman shuddered as if conscious of an evil presence.

"I like to see a man's face when I tell his fortune," she said, evasively; "light the candle so that I may count the lines in your forehead."

"Is your art, then, dependent upon such paltry tricks?" exclaimed the stranger, impatiently. "I thought you read from intuition, and a knowledge of your —" he said no more, for the Indian stepping back had changed to a fairy. Her eyes, naturally large, flashed like fire, while the seams on her dark face quivered and deepened, and her lips grew pale. Slowly the man lifted himself from his seat, gazing with a cowardly fear showing under his assumed surprise, and almost cowering under her gaze. At last he spoke, "It is I who suffer most, woman; give me my child!"

In vain she strove to speak. Her gaunt frame shook, her pale



Eyes trembled, her long, snaky locks writhed upon her head, — her hands clutched at the air — but she hissed at last to the man, “Curse thee, “Accursed of God and man — give me back my child! You made my life a desert; you tore a man’s heart; you’ve killed me and mine. Vengeance! stand there and look. I saw you; I saw you in the air below; your trail was on the ground I passed over; your breath tainted the storm.”

“Silence, tell me!” cried the man with a fierce gesture, “and tell me, where is my child? Look! I will give you gold — a fortune if you will restore her. Her mother is dying, broken-hearted; tell me where she is?”

“Go look at her bones,” said the other in a low, exciting voice, “they are all that’s left of your delicate baby; and so she is dying — ah! ha, ha, ha, ha! and the child is dead — ha, ha, ha, ha!”

“Dead!” and the man seemed to lose power as he stood — “dead!” he repeated in a blank voice.

“You like news, you like good news, don’t you?” said the woman bitterly, “you’re an editor and give the people news; go spread it, talk of the old Indian woman who could talk like a lawyer; it will make your paper sell — but I’ll whisper something in your ear — don’t be afraid of me — I’ve lost the Indian taste for bloody business, how white folks kill; the child isn’t dead, nor likely to be. But let me tell you, Heron Le Veneur, you will never see your child!”

Why record the fearful ramifications, the startling incidents that passed in the chamber of that old inn, where the strange, blood-curdling reprieve? The boy, excited, pale as a terror, was forced never to listen, and in his fright sometimes sprang to his feet to run, but he checked by the sound of doors, he started back, but the old woman, moving a pounce at the door, hid the chamber, dragging her ears back over the threshold.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CHIP BEGINS TO SEE THE WORLD.

None seemed to give a moment’s thought to the old Indian woman, who, in the extremity of her rage, ran from one end of the large kitchen, whether she had wanted her way, to the stove, pouring, cursing, pulling her dress and boxes, and dragging her hands.

The fire had been carefully raked over, and although it was not so high, yet up and down she flew, like a dog, barking to and fro, barking and panting, that had a not much to do with the business of her reading work, and the excitement of the night, but she seemed to have been disturbed. Reported at last by the mistress that the poor boy and her mother were tucked up and toward the chimney, and with the paper before them, were reading the words and stories of the old



then crunched down by their cold warmth. Presently she gathered some of the man's belongings and threw them on, blowing the embers, and sparks and flames, that they sent a curling blaze among the light wood.

"There!" she muttered, "now it will be a satisfaction to hang them at *his* door, and let them burn, burn."

She sat looking heavily and thinking, with knitted brows and lips working nervously. The bright fire gave to her gray, stained face an unearthly look, stamped as it was with evil passions, and threw into full relief the scars with which, with the gritty taste of the labor, she had covered her grotesque features. Now and then the shakings of the tall chairs and heavy cushions trembled along the floor; the old clock ticked with monotonous tone, and the sizzling wind, like an evil presence, crept down the chimney.

"That boy was with him. Now," she muttered again; "yes, yes; it was he who ran to for me — the little one to be sure. And this man will lead him to go to the cage — give him money. No no; Mother Henshaw is coming, and she will catch the right ye all think her; she'll be traveling by day-light, while the rest are sleeping in their beds — and I shall go with her; yes, somebody else with her," she added, in a shrill, sing-song, trembling voice.

And so it was that during the month, the old woman prepared to sleep. Occasionally she would start, raise herself upon her elbow, peer about the kitchen, and hear no sound — listen intently, with a gleam in her wild eyes, but gradually fatigue overcame her and she sank into a fitful slumber. The faint fire shot up, painting her hollow eyes and sunken cheeks red livid as flame, and melted along the falling embers, and finally died out, leaving her in the deep, howling gloom, asleep.

The next strange fear, when Martin entered the kitchen with a bundle on his back. Working straight up to the fireplace, she had almost fallen over the enormous figure of the old woman, who had not yet awakened.

"Look! you old witch!" she growled, when her customary fury was over, "what is the object of having you here? Hark, and you see, Mother Garsie, I ought to know, or I never your name's," she cried, waving her hand for effect, "come, I've got work to do — I've got to get out the a dozen hazy boats we need's the seven men, and extra — a woman to go up before morning, if she's worked as hard as they have. Yes," she muttered, "the master has an army boat with him at the time; it's a damned hard thing to sit in a woman's shoes and be dragged by two good, strong boats. I say, you old witch, don't you hear?"

"Yes, yes; but you can't have the child; you can't have the child, but if you can't you must let it," repeated the old woman sleepily, as she rubbed her head of ashes, and heavily yawning, closing her bleared eyes.

The old woman looked at the fire, and was comforted by her candle, and went on to her bed. When she awoke in the morning



blew through the kitchen; the door was left open through which Mother Kurstegin had gone; a pool of water, formed during the night, lay in the hollow passage way, and the damp bushes at the door sprinkled their heavy tears upon the gray stone slab outside.

The road was skirted by thick woods, and the Indian pressed on under the perpetual showering from the trees. The wind blew dimly, penetrating the folds of the water-soaked blanket folded about her gaunt, haggard figure. Through her dull eyes, the way was dark before her, but the morning was breaking cold and gloomy. Sometimes she hummed the snatch of an old tune; sometimes muttered in Delaware, her native dialect; often she paused, and with lips firmly set shook her head defiantly; sometimes she whistled, or strained her ear to listen for the wheels of some early teamster, who might, through fear if not compassion, indulge her with a ride as far as he went. Soon the opaque atmosphere brightened a little, giving firm and color to the drizzling rain that fell unweariedly. As she journeyed on, the country became more open and rugged. Miniature hills alternated with miniature valleys; masses of rock unevenly piled, relieved the monotony of bush and stunted pine. At length coming to a strange formation of stone and earth, over which the huge branches of a century-elm fell with a picturesque effect, and where a new pine growth spread foliage and roots, the old woman paused. Looking about her to be sure no one was near, she parted the straggly covering, crept through what appeared to be a fissure in the rock, and emerged on the other side into a low wooded ravine, and from thence into a tract of woods untouched by the hand of the pioneer. Along a path scarcely discernible, and filled now with branches and whatever the torrents had brought from the hills she made her way into the thicket. With a dexterity that betrayed a practiced eye, she picked a narrow trail, sometimes sinking foot deep into a recess, and availing herself of overhanging branches or rotten logs, which she had evidently placed there with her own hands, she came to the base of the hill on the summit of which she dwelt. The way up this steep ascent, wooded to its top, was toilsome in the extreme. Many a time her strength failed her utterly, and she sat upon a stunted knoll or jagged rock, and bent her head upon her hands. It was late in the morning when she gained the little spot, where her hut was placed by the strong hand of nature. Drawing aside the bushes by which the entrance was concealed, she glided noiselessly within the rocky dwelling. The floor was dry and carpeted richly with crust-like moss. Through another opening near the roof, the interior of this singular home became dimly visible. A furnace stood near the door lined with stones. Two rude seats were ranged against the rough walls, with some regard to order, a large board being propped up between, answering for a table. A bed of dried moss in a covering of blue cloth lay in one corner, and on it, in this solitary, cheerless place, where no white man's footfall had ever sounded, shut in by forest trees, nested bushes and thick branches, lay a little child, a lovely little child, with pale cheeks, diminutive figure, and long, golden-tinted, gleamy hair.



streaming over the coarse pillow. Mother Kurstegan went toward her, stooped and gazed earnestly for a moment, then turned to her duties. Untying a bundle, in which, the night before, she had thrown the remnants of her supper, she laid them upon the table. Then she threw off her wet shawl, hung it upon a projection of the rock, and taking from beneath the bed some decent garments, she changed her drugged clothes for dry ones. Setting her furnace near the mouth of the tiny cave, she struck a fire with flints and tinder, and placed a non-descript utensil, filled with water, on the furnace top. Then from a box she took meal, and kneading it into a flat cake, set it to bake. Next she examined the child's clothes that lay beside her bed. They were large and coarse, and had been made out of her own garments. Taking from an old worn basket a needle and some thread, she proceeded to stitch together such parts as needed repairing, muttering the while about her miserable lot; and after that was done, she made a little bundle of the clothes, and with a heavy sigh that spoke of regret, proceeded to waken the child.

"Up, Chip, wake up!" she cried touching the delicate shoulder with a *hard* hand.

The little girl, accustomed to her voice, sprang upright and her soft eyes, in which a sweet yet mournful expression was pre dominant, turned instinctively toward the old Indian woman. She spoke not a word, but a win, almost vacant smile flitted for a moment over her pensive features, and she pressed her little hands to her head with unchildish meaning in her look.

"Come, and dress yourself and eat your breakfast, for we've a long tramp to go this day."

The child turned again and gazed into the old woman's face, as if not comprehending the import of her language.

"Don't look so like a heathen, child," exclaimed Mother Kurstegan, "don't you want to see something of the world, poor little fool? don't you think it's almost time? Only think! ten long years, and you've never taken one step outside this wilderness. Well it don't know what the world is, but it shall, soon enough. Come, stop staring, I say, will you? and dress yourself! I'm going to carry you where you shall open your eyes before night."

A bewildering joy possessed the child; every fiber of her frame quivered; every nerve thrilled. In the intensity of the hate nursed by a shattered mind, it had been the old woman's policy to tell the wildest, most extravagant tales about the world beyond the little cave. And she had also taught her the darkest lessons of fear, filling the brain of the poor little girl with specters of horrible import, and beasts of hideous form, so that when the shadows fell upon the cave-hat, Chip, if alone, crept shuddering into her bed, and knew no God of whom to invoke peace and protection. But she had also told her that away beyond the precincts of her isolated dwelling-place, beyond the hills which she had watched glittering and glowing with the treasures of sun and dew, was the great world, where



houses were made of solid gold, and streets were filled with flowers and angels with shining wings; and there was the softest light there and the richest music, and she should have wanted to go there, and learn strange and wonderful things, and see sights of splendour.

At this, the poor little child, who had never, within her remembrance, seen one human face or heard one human voice, stretched out the old Indian woman, who told her that she had been a princess once, nursing in the arms of a great king, and when she had been put to sleep, she had been changed into a little girl, and she had been so happy and so kind that she had been to rest with delicate pleasure. Her eyes opened and she saw the blue stars; she kept moving her breath in great sobs, and trembled from excessive delight.

"Shall we see the *beef* creatures, too?" she suddenly asked, shivering at the thought, "and if we do, can you keep them away from me?"

"I tell thee all this morning that I should pass through the woods with you and command thee to go to their hiding-places in the dark caves that stretch aside under the earth, and where all the winds and the storms, the thunders and the lightning are kept," replied the old woman, with a gravity that marked her as an older person than Chip. "I can do as I please with thee," she continued, "but I shall not let you see the beautiful things and the beasts till I please; so, I bind your eyes now," and she made a few magic-like passes over the child's face. "Now, now you will see nothing until I am ready. Then will come a great king with a splendid crown upon his head, and he will take you to his palace, and make you a little queen."

"Oh," cried the wren child, with sparkling eyes and eager face, clapping her hands as she spoke, "I am so glad!"

"I love your kind of a queen," muttered her strange companion, turning her back, "you will never see that again, my chip."

After they had eaten their simple meal, the old woman, telling the child remain quiet, went out to take a look at the little something of a grave. Digging the bank, to see that it was firmly imbedded in the ground, and then passing over it with an air of triumph, she again entered the cave, and prepared the child for its first entrance into the world, and waiting its heart for the journey.

All things were duly prepared, and the Indian woman and her poor little protegee commenced their journey down the sides of the hill. For the first half-hour, the child turned round by instinct, looking back at the strange old woman, and then she turned to look at the Mother Keweenaw. But her face was so pale, and her eyes were so dim, that she could see nothing but the path that led down the hill, and she could hope to discern.

"Would the world look like that?" whispered the child.

"No, no! Hark, when I talk to thee," said the woman in a low, monotonous tone:



[illegible]

All this time, poor little Gipsy, with her eyes closed hard and scarcely breathing for fear, lay motionless, and, dreading she knew not what, but guessing, feeling a cold sweat upon her cheek, she suddenly started back, as if from the edge of an abyss, staring and trembling on the water-mat, the water-lilies spreading as they tripped in and out from the branches of the great elm.

"I know," answered Mother Karstgen, "we are out of the woods, and now, as we are not in so great a hurry, we must walk on, on, a long ways till the sun goes down."

The child's sunny heart, still new and tinged with love, took  
 pleasure in her mother's improved state. She gazed about her.  
 The yellowing oat rows, the over-cultivated but lately downy, and  
 the grey-russet corn, and every spear was golden-capped. The sky  
 above—so many years of looking down!—such a wide, wonderful, glori-  
 ous expanse, framed with the clouds of little white clouds, soft as  
 the snow, and blue as a mother's eye! She walked along, wing-footed;  
 happy and content, and soothed with a fiery delight.

The day was almost gone. The last of June had been eaten for dinner many hours ago, and it was so late that, perhaps, could not walk any further. She was very hungry; her feet were aching — the rough March weather had made her feel as if her shoes were very, and when she stepped down, the sand was where she was used to walking, and her feet were really painful. Evening was coming on, and the cold to which the novelty of sight-seeing had given rise, was now increasing, so that great people, and I myself, were obliged to wear wraps with us when we walked.

[illegible]



and whiter, and held her breath, and clasping her hands with it power to move, as the terrible object, with a noise that seemed louder than thunder, came rumbling along, with two fearful creatures abreast.

"Hilloa!" shouted a coarse voice; "that's somethin' human."

The monster market-wagon came to a dead stand opposite the frightened child, and a man with a heavy beard, and shivering straps that flapping over his sunburned face, and upon his farmer's frock, surveyed the shrinking child fixedly.

"Got lost, little one?" he asked.

No answer — only the wild eyes glared, and seemed to throb with fright.

"Hilloa! Say, little girl, are you lost?" he asked again. Still the child was utterly incapable of replying, but she sobbed and moaned in a pitiful way.

"Well! this is a strange fix for a young 'un like that, seems to me. Must been walking all day, too; little feet bleeding — she! looks tired to death. Here little one," he soliloquized, moving to descend from his wagon; "night's a coming mighty fast, and whether you're strayed, lost, or stolen, I shall take you up and tote you home — 'taint more'n a Christian duty. Whoa! Jeff, while I git out and take this youngster, in."

Chip had not stirred, could not move. A deathly sickness came over her as she felt the grasp of the strong-armed man, and found herself swinging up in the great wagon, and presently deposited upon some soft straw behind the seat. Fear had paralyzed every energy; she shivered with a vague horror that she was to be thrown into some hole with all the imaginary hobgoblins that her demented old keeper had taught her to fear. Meanwhile Mother Kurstegin had gained the house, little dreaming, as she paused to tell a young girl's fortune, that the treasure she had periled so much to obtain and to keep, was even then a mile from the spot where she had lost it in seeming security.

## CHAPTER V.

### LE VAUGHN VISITS THE CAVE — CHIP'S NEW HOME

"Whoa! you beast — whoa."

The sound reached Le Vaughn, who opened his window and gazed into the stable-yard. Every dry stick, leafless twig, and withered glass-blade, was gemmed with dew, and the wide area of the tavern was all astir. Turkeys, hens, chickens, cats, and dogs, stared in mute wonder at the vision of the old coach and the lean horse that Job Goodale prized next to his wife and child.



"Stage ready!" cried Park, mounting with a flourish, handling the reins in true driver-style, and turning the lumbering vehicle, out of whose broken windows looked the pleasant face of the professor — and away they drove.

Le Vaughn turned from the window, to prepare for his visit to the cave. Breakfast over, his horse was brought round, Nick placed on the saddle behind him, and they proceeded on their way. It was a cool, but vividly fresh and lovely morning. The dew lay like crowded jewels on the bushes by the wayside, lighted with splendor by the sun. The gaily flowers of autumn expended all their vitality in bloom, and the closely-set edges of the road, bordered with pines, oaks, and maples, gave out their peculiar odor.

The sun was two hours high when they neared the spot which Nick remembered as having passed through, and which now, even with the presence of Le Vaughn, he trembled to approach. The previous rains had saturated and swollen the earth, and at every step the mud and water oozed up over their feet. Le Vaughn tied his horse, drew his boots up outside his nether garments, and after surveying the lush and peering in vain through the matted undergrowth, essayed to thrust himself through on the other side.

"You see I'm waiting for you."

The voice was low, hollow, and unearthly. Nick stood shivering in every limb, and Le Vaughn glanced aghast as the gaunt form of Mother Kurstegun lifted itself from the forest-gloom, and her chuckle defiant with suppressed malice, sounded on his ear.

"Did you expect to find it with *that* witting?" she asked, pointing to Nick, who crouched away with terror. "He! he! set a fool to lead a fool on a fool's errand. Come, you see I expected you, and so waited; if you want proof I'm ready to give it."

So saying, she plunged into the path, and Le Vaughn followed her, forgetting Nick, who, in his excitement and terror, clung to the place through which he had emerged, and as soon as he lost sight of the two, eagerly found his way out into the road.

"Take care, don't break your neck," muttered the old woman, turning at every plunge, and smiling grimly at the bespattered object in her rear; "this is a swampy place, reckon you think; it ain't like the city streets you're used to, is it, honey."

Thus mockingly she taunted him, until they came on firmer ground, and began the ascent of the hills.

"See, now, isn't this a fine open place to bring up a child?" at last she said, pausing and confronting him; "no brick walls, no staid yards — all nature, grand nature, my own mother's care!" she cried, lifting her arms, "before the curse of the white man came upon me. Six long years they sent me to the schools, and took pride in my quickness and my genius; but it was only a curse to the Indian girl; sorrow was the first great lesson, made stronger and keener by the possession of knowledge. And the same with my own child. Oh! why didn't I take her into the wilderness and bring her up in solitude, never to see the face of man? Come, come



along," she added, in another mood, "I've got a nice little game to show you, up here."

The words and the manner struck a deadly chill through the frame of the strong man, but he bowed on, though his knees shook together, and his heart filled him to the fear. At length they reached the hut, when, springing inside the little cave, the Indian exclaimed:

"Now you may go away as soon as you please; I can defend myself, and you can't come in here, for I have a tiger's scent to revenge the lost of her young, I am she."

He Varn did not enter; he felt that if he did so it would be at the peril of his life. He turned, and the little shaft of wood, with the torch burnt therein, met his sight. With a great cry he wrenched the door out from the socket, and then he flung it and crawled down by the door of the cave, hearing his heart the click of a gun-lock.

"The hag! she will murder me, for aught I know; the place and the hour are fit. Hark!" and he listened again, then sought to find crack or crevice that he might look within, but in vain — all was silent.

As he stood there, the chilly hand at his feet, his lips locked together, his teeth clenched, and with cold fingers groping round for the rigid stern markings of his nature — the grand say, however, the darkness beneath — his thoughts were in pain, and his frame thrilled with the intensity of his emotions. His eyes, dry and bright, wandered restlessly from the door to the track of wood and below, as if he would find some trace of the little child's foot, for he would not believe her dead. His look, now stern and pale, now flushed and palpitating, betrayed by the rapid movement of the muscles the dreadful state of his mind. In his position he was a fully lighted room, a couch on which he was stretched full length, looking directly shrouded from the Indian's gaze. It was the pale, sweet, pleading face of his wife, which, when the great trial, when from street to street echoed the cry, "where is he — stolen!" had never failed, but in the anguish of her sorrow had wept night and day, till she could no longer sustain the burden of the grave. From the white-clothing changes that through his brain, he walked to and fro, back and forth, as the waves of earth seemed, reaching his wife's name and place, "where is he — stolen!" and stopping, at last, he saw that woman dead, and threw the wretched mortal to the ground and fled. The woman lay and the day passed, and the night came, and the morning came, but he was not there. In the night, when the moon shone, a woman's voice, and that these were not human voices, and a voice even more unearthly, he exclaimed:

"What means this mockery? the child is not here. Come you, Indian devil, tell me if she be living or dead, and I will leave this cursed spot."

A mocking laugh was the Indian's answer as the man left him.



"I tell you in the better that she was alive, and so she is; I tell you, too, that she is dead; do you believe it? Hark! don't go off now; gentlemen should never show temper; it may do for a while. There, now, you are in a firm; how moderate! Should I hold your hand to steady you? Don't look at me that way, it isn't good for me. Come, come, comfort you. If you don't take care of your own child here, you will in that little chapel at the tavern. I tell you, you shall certainly see your own child, and I have kept my word; take care of him as you would of her, and see what will come of it;" and taking a narrow, trodden path, she walked rapidly away, her laugh dying on the still air.

The hut was indeed empty; no trace of a child was any where to be seen. Bitterly, enraged, the hunter's father turned his face toward the descent. He was entirely ignorant of the locality, he had no note of the surroundings as he came, so that he found himself, after a little time vainly seeking a path in the thick forest at the foot of the hill.

"Why, Nick! how came you here?" he exclaimed, as the boy presented himself, in the time of his extremity, sated and panting and pale.

"I bet 's if you'd want me," replied Nick, hanging his head at the warmth of voice and evident pleasure expressed by the Virgin.

"You did a brave thing, boy; you were a coward; I'll repay you for this; you shall go home and live with me, and be a man's son."

Timothy's blue eyes twinkled with pleasure, for he had seen the herald of an earnest, true friend. Heedless of a wet, heavy, and somewhat chilly evening, with no prospect of rain, or of other, nothing to call for either love or caution, it seemed like opening the door of a new world to him to hear the voice of kindness and consolation. Carefully Le Vaughn picked his way through the wood, Nelly going before, and they came out where the horse still stood, impatient from his long confinement.

[illegible]

Compelled to sit on the ground, the young state of mind, the  
tension was not in the very front of the present moment. When  
she felt in the presence of the mother, kindly heart, her little face  
stayed in the light of it. It was not, but not so, only deep to  
hide from her sight a swarm of yellow hearts, each clamoring to know  
what dad had got.



"Git out, all of you; go into your ma and tell her I've brought another young one home, a poor little creetur I picked up by the side of the wild woods, with nary a livin' critter near her. Somebody or nuther got tired of her, I s'pose; like's not, felas is so heartless in a-a-days;" and so talking, holding the trembling child against his heavy driver's coat, he entered the ample kitchen, followed by nine youngsters, clamoring, laughing, shouting, and demanding to see the queer thing dad had got.

Supper smoked on the table, and Chip, who by degrees began to be reconciled to the strange sights about her, allowed herself to be led to the well-filled board, and seated beside Bob, from whom, however, she instinctively shrank.

"I wonder if the child knows how to eat?" said Mrs. Snackskin, helping everybody; "what did you eat to home, little gal?"

"Johnny-cake," said Chip, at which they all laughed till she cowered down in her seat with fright.

"Don't you mind 'em, sissy," said the farmer, spreading a generous slice of bread with apple-sauce, and laying it on her plate; "they ain't got no manners here; was brought up with the pigs."

Chip ate with silence, casting timid glances around, the other children disposed of their food voraciously, and for hunger's sake, knowing little of and caring less for the rules of the table; and after supper, with a vigorous application of tongue and knuckles they were driven off to bed. By the flaring light of a dim candle, Chip saw a long, gloomy chamber, with heavy rafters overhead, and here and there a bed clumsily made, peeping out of the darkness. Around the walls garments hung; baskets and half-barrels stood on the uneven floor, heaps of corn lay in confusion, and a curtain, torn in strips by the mischievous hands of children, hung from the large window through whose broken panes the wind blew. Six of the children slept in this chamber, all girls, and Chip was to be crowded in with Kitty and Drony, the two youngest.

In the morning the poor little homeless and friendless wail was delirious with fever.

"It's plain to see here's a hard case on my hands, Hiram Snackskin," ejaculated his worthy dame, turning to her abstracted spouse, as, thoughtfully gazing in the fire, he replenished his pipe. "I haven't got nothing to do to-day, nothing at all; I'm a lady to dress in silks and satins and suck my fingers; yes, I haven't got time to scour and the week's ironing to do, besides churning and cooking, and it's because I haven't got one single thing to do that this child is on my hands. Oh, dear, dear! Hiram Snackskin, you were born, I do believe, to be the particular plague of my life."

"She'll do something to earn her eat, I warrant, wife," returned the prosy Snackskin.

"Turn her salt! do you know she's up-stairs raving with a fever? How do you know but it's an affectionate one, and all the children'll git it? Kitty says she hugged her close last night. I'm sure I don't know what I'm going to do."



"Going to take care of that chill," said the man, stoutly; "if you won't, why, I will."

"You'll kill her, with that stuff," responded the wife.

"Let me alone for that;" and Hiram Snackskin wended his way up-stairs.

"Poor young 'un," exclaimed the benevolent Snackskin, standing at the foot of the bed and gazing compassionately on the child, "looks as if she'd got her death-warrant; poor little young un what is she talking about, you Kit?"

"She wants some drink," responded Kitty, looking very much as if she would like to get away from her charge.

"Well, she shall have it, so she shall. Lift her up, Kit, here's a nice bowlful of good strong coffee, nice and hot — drink, little gal."

Chip, in her feverish thirst, grasped the sides of the bowl with both hands, and sucked down the beverage, strong and hot as it was; then with a look of gratitude she fell back on the bed.

"Now just set and take good care of her, you Kit; tell her stories, and kinder lift her mind off of her feelings, and she'll be up by and by, fresh and hearty as ever. Don't you leave her now you hear! I'm going pretty soon with the hands, and your mother, she ain't got nothing to do, en'y to do every thing generally, so you must take care of the poor little gal; now mind."

He went down-stairs and out to the barn without saying any thing to his wife. Kitty, already tired of her irksome employment, crept to the window, and watched till she saw the farm-hands go off with him to the fields, then she muttered to herself that she wasn't going to wait upon a beggar, and slyly left the room.

Chip lifted her head with an effort; it burned and throbbed, and seemed to bound back and forth on the pillow with the fierce rush of blood through its arteries. She was all alone. The sunlight quivered through the narrow casement, but it did not light up the gloomy chamber with its many corners. The garments that hung against the wall moved strangely and solemnly to the child's excited fancy, and she recalled the name of Mother Kurstegan; even her presence had been welcome in this dreary hour. Once or twice she attempted to rise, but a strange sickening sensation held her back, pinioned to the bed. And then she began to talk; she was in her cave-house, playing with the rattle tops the Indian woman had fashioned for her — she listened to wild stories of demons and evil spirits conjured by the magic power of incantation; she lived over again the scenes of her displacement from the only home she had ever known, and pictured of the fearful sights she should soon see. Hour after hour passed and she was still alone, alone, and the kind-hearted tempter assailed her even to the little time, and found her raving and laughing and shouting. He went down-stairs instantly, and taking Kitty, who had nearly forgotten her charge, by the arm, shook her till she was red in the face; then turning to his wife, he exclaimed,

"I tell you what, old woman! you'll have the death of that poor child on your soul yet, are you a heathen to let her lay sick as a dog all alone?"



"Mercy on us, Hiram Sack-skin, what is the chill to do? I haven't got any children of my own - nothing to do all day but watch a strange gal because she's took a little chill. I thought one of the children was there. Ain't you going to eat your dinner?"

"Dinner be hanged! Children be hanged! Peh, go and make up the salt; I'll have a dinner, if I have to go five miles for wood, and give him five dollars beside. I tell you, Nancy, that's a sick child, and you ain't got any feeling for the poor little thing -- bronzy, and me them boots."

"I'd like to know what makes you take to the chill so, Hiram Sack-skin?" exclaimed the matron, with flashing eyes; "you ain't over much tender of your own, any how."

"Why, bless your spirit, soul and body, woman!" cried out the farmer, fiercely, pausing with his left leg half way in his coat, "do I want a human creature to die under my roof like a dog, and fly a song to her, and she a-crying with a fever? No, I'll be there, old I'll be; really, Bob; now," he added, with a quiet irony, "you all sit down and eat your dinners, and sit there, while she's up to be dying, I'll see to her," and he was gone.

Mrs. Sack-skin pressed her hand across her eyes, but whether the tears were of grief or jealousy, it is impossible for me to tell. She could not eat, however, nor could she sleep, but going the table in charge of her eldest daughter, she crept up stairs, and lay down. As she entered the attic chamber, Chip was standing over her bed, her slight form fallen from her shoulders, her hands upraised, her eyes fast and upon the wall, dilated, and shining brighter than all human brilliancy, while from her parched lips came the words, "Mother, mother, take me too -- me too," and then, the spell broken, she sank down, covering, shivering, and shaming.

"She saw something," said the farmers wife under her breath, and started, awe-stricken, she hurried to the bedside, and spoke not a word, saying words. But Chip heard her not; her eyes were wild and glassy, her strength was gone, her breath came short and hot.

"Dear knows what I'm to do with her," murmured Mrs. Sack-skin; "I wish I'd thought more about her. She's been crying something!" and she shuddered as she thought of it. "Sleep, sleep," and she uttered no more enticing words to catch her attention, until with the chill that had started her to turn round to look.

"What if her father's been watching of her in this room?" she thought the farmer's wife, rising up at the midnight hour, and looking at the child. "I've heard of such things before, and I'll be bound to stop. I guess I'll cover her up and get her some more sleep." So saying she turned out the light, and went down, and went led her way to the cheerful kitchen.

The room was bright and comfortable, and Chip had turned to sleep, because exhausted.

In the midst of the noise, the odor of cooking, and the sounds of labor, the lonely child rested with scarcely a breath of life in her meager body. Some times Kitty or Bony would venture near. " "



away, and then start finally back, resuming their noisy play. The children then turned and moved away by themselves, but the quiet ones, and those who stop to play for a moment, are quiet. At last, the children are all gone, and I sit alone at the door, and presently in walked the farmer and the doctor.

When I was in the hospital, I had a very good time. I was with a lot of people, and I was very happy. I was very interested in the people I met, and I was very interested in the people I met. I was very interested in the people I met, and I was very interested in the people I met.

"Sugar baby," he remarked, turning to the farmer, "whose child is she?"

[illegible][illegible]

"I'm sorry I don't know where I can find her," replied Miss Snackskin, peevishly.

[illegible]

hastened with rapid movement to envelop the child in her arms. Then, as the poor girl went out to find another place to lie down, she turned to her sad, crying child.

"My dear, who do you think has been here?" asked the doctor's wife as he stepped within his own hall.



"I could hardly venture to guess," replied the doctor hurriedly.

"Mr. Le Vaughn, your old Philadelphia friend," returned his wife; "I tried hard to persuade him to remain till you came, but he would not: he was very much disappointed at your absence."

"Well, wife, I'll tell you what it is: will you have a little hot pepper and vinegar? I have caught a cold — a sick chill."

With a trembling hand, in presence of the model wife of the good doctor, and to excite his wife's, and in an instant the sick child was brought in, in the arms of Hanna Snackskin, and placed upon a soft white couch.

"Dear little angel," murmured the doctor's wife, "where did you find her? whose child is she? has she no mother?"

"I should say not," said Hanna, his eyes fastened to the sweet face. "I found her, yes, ma'am, half-paralyzed, as I may say," he added — proud of his part in the transaction.

"She's very sick, Henry; you'll have to burden yourself to care for her."

"It will be no burden to me, you know, doctor; but oh! how sick she is!" and he laid down by the little couch with the tenderness of a mother, while the doctor went out with Hanna Snackskin.

"And now, dear wife, let us hear about Le Vaughn," said the doctor, after he had attended to his little patient.

"First tell me; is this a dangerous case?" asked the wife, laying her hand tenderly on the brow of the unconscious child.

"Her pulse is faster than it was, her head is tender; we must get some more sleep; her head is feeling better. Yes, it is a very dangerous case; the symptoms are all unfavorable," replied the doctor, "but, perhaps with good nursing and with God's blessing, we may bring her through."

"I never saw such a child," mused the doctor's wife, the tears falling upon her eyes, "she looks as though of our own little Emma."

"To tell you the truth, the same thought struck me," said the doctor, "and it was that resemblance to our Emma and the child that instigated me to bring her here."

"And we keep her here till she is better?" the wife asked, looking at him with a questioning eye. "I don't know, but I don't like to see her lying on the floor, and I don't like to see her lying on the floor, and I don't like to see her lying on the floor."

"But what is your plan, my dear?" he asked, turning to the subject, he asked about Le Vaughn again.

"He was in a great hurry, and he was in a hurry," said the wife.

"On horseback, as usual, I suppose."

"Yes, knowing after the case, and, my dear, I never saw a man look so badly."

"Following after the child — what in the world do you mean — my dear?"

"Why, if I understood him, he had some one in charge in the



course, but he was so excited and so strange, that I could hardly make anything of him. He seemed to me very much changed and very nervous, and he told us in there was sickness or trouble at

"Poor fellow! he has no other children, and now the loss of his son," added the woman; "he was, I am sure, a father, full of family affection, and with the excitement of his own mother, gay, witty, and lively; but now he is dull, and rather sad, and any slight thing troubles and agitates him. In short, he has been more and unhappy."

...the ... ..

"Yes, and he is a man of special talents, but it seems as if the memory of some wrong clung to him."

"I don't know," answered his wife; "I rather think he is very much attached to his family."

"I did not like," replied the latter, "heil Niz'ski's wife; but when young he was a great wine-brewer, and in his room that appetite may have led him to excesses. The story may not be true, but I have heard it, and I would not wish to offend him, as he is one only with a young girl of fourteen, and I wish her a wife, and then do not quarrel. I do not know how true this is, I repeat, I only heard of it lately.

"And do you think the injured will see the light?" asked his wife.

"What eyes!" cried the doctor, laughing in his wife's face; "why I haven't thought of that — probably some emissary of hers if not herself; I shouldn't wonder."

"Sister, sister!" exclaimed the doctor's wife, drawing a long breath; "your little patient is stirring, the fever is coming on," she said, turning to her son; "alack! poor child! who can tell your story?"

## CHAPTER VI.

### LE VAUGHN RETURNS TO A DESOLATE HOME.

It was a beautiful morning on the 10th of September on which  
 the Viceroy, General Lord Dalhousie, rode through the streets to his  
 office.

[illegible]







[illegible]

Monday the servant had again been sent to the house. A well-known friend of the author had just died and a letter was being written by the hand.

"That is Mr. Le Verrier's discovery," said the man, holding the boy within by drawing him forward.

"Yes, sir; but the doctor is a terrible one, and wouldn't wish to see anybody; he's just lost his wife."

[illegible]

1. The first of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, but a complex one, involving many different factors, and the second is the fact that the system is not a static one, but a dynamic one, involving many different factors.

[illegible]

For a moment. Now, he was looking at the new clothes, first







ously. Nick felt a sensation of swooning over him from head to foot, without admitting the nature of his emotional ailment, watching Martha as she nursed.

It is a very common mistake to suppose that the only way to get a good idea of the meaning of a word is to look up its definition in a dictionary. This is not true. The meaning of a word is determined by the way it is used in a particular context. For example, the word "bank" can mean a financial institution or the side of a river. The meaning is clear from the context in which it is used.

times why she heard no signs of life up-stairs

Walter and Ned were still young, when Miss Collins, the daughter of the farmer who was killed with La Vange, and who were his only living relatives in America, entered the kitchen.

"Who is this little boy, Martha?" asked Celeste.

"If you will, I will bring him home, and I will stay, and attend to what he says, he will stay here," replied Martha.

"Oh, he is in the harness-maker's line, I suppose," said the girl, smilingly; "I wonder if he knows about the city. Can you go to John Lake's straw-shop for me, little fellow?"

"He never was in the city, either — he don't know nothing about it," replied Martin; "if you'll wait till I see the man, I'll go for you."

"Oh, that's a kind of story, Martha, I'm sure; if you'll just ask Mrs. Swan, the firewoman, you know, if my black Nigger ever brought it, and if she'll send it with her bill, I'll be ever so much obliged to you," and Celeste left the kitchen.

"If you'd like to go with me, little boy, you may," said Martha, as she stood shawled and bonneted, after putting all things in readiness for the dinner to be served up.

[illegible]

led from a side door into a lofty well ventilated apartment, at the foot of which stood a large table, and on which were placed several books, and a few other articles. A woman, who appeared to be a French, with a muslin kerchief tied over her neck and bosom, a



plain cap, differing only from Quaker simplicity by the addition of a deep bordered brim, a low, broad forehead, over which was passed a black ribbon, underneath which a narrow edge of silver hair was visible. Mrs. Swan was an awkward woman. Her face was browned far more than youth; her lips, which were compressed constantly, and have been at no very recent time relaxed fully; a deep shadow lay under her cheekbones, and her low forehead was free from wrinkles. Her hair, which was brown, was very thin, and was revealed a lot of wiry gray. Her hands, small and bony, were heavily covered with the hard, planted nails of her slave to the work. An atmosphere of sinister mystery seemed to surround her — her calm, deep, dark eye, remarkable only for a concentration of light, that poured as it looked through the darkness and fear of an intricate labyrinth of the secret, hidden, in her presence, terrified in spite of himself. It seemed as if she were guarded and kept at bay from all confiding and interfering influences. The young ladies in the store-room looked at her as if she were a priestess, and came to her with all their strange, sense of the sympathy of her great, strong, and deep heart. And it was not strange, under her eyes as they had many of them been for several years, that they were all, quiet, thoughtful, and modest in manner and appearance. The visitation of John Lake was a fact even to the school-children, and the parents were careful to place one of their daughters under the supervision of Mrs. Swan, but that she was, by a lady's speaking, sure to be the pills that threatened the young in great cities. Martha, who seemed to know the new woman, went immediately up to the little table, upon which, paper and pen in hand, Mrs. Swan seemed to have been casting her eyes, and delivered her message, still holding Nick by the hand. Nick, by the way, was counting a little down on his fingers. His face, round eyes, reddened with a reply of motion that set they might be due to laughing, and he, now his discomfort, laughed back again, as though he was being teased at the expense of him. Mrs. Swan, rising to attend to the order, perceived the boy, and poured a minute look of inquiry toward Martha.

"He don't belong to me, ma'am, nor any of mine," replied Martha, drawing him a nearer to her side, and holding his attention to Mrs. Swan.

"I have regarded him as my adopted son, then, with a right to his name, and to his property, and, after a long and serious consideration, I have decided to keep him. Martha's head, with a request that she should be very kind to take care of him, and to make any arrangements to be made."

"I have seen him," said the woman, "and I have seen the little fellow?" he asked, taking Nick by the hand.

"Yes, sir, but only once," replied Martha, "early this morning; indeed, sir, it was a hard blow for the poor man."

The forewoman turned away, and the little fellow, as Mrs. Swan said, was in her power, and she, with her eyes, and then she











to get her; it wasn't my love," said she, "I saw her and knew her — and she saw me, and knew me, and cried out to me to me — but it that moment I was taken again with you, Martha." "And was she not, and a good house?" I asked — "for I can't help feeling that she must have known all about it — but she only grieved a little, and wouldn't reveal me. Oh! it made me feel so!" — and Martha burst into a wild cry, and sobbed for a moment uncontrolably. "Please don't say," she said, distressed, wiping her eyes hastily with her apron — "but you told me to tell you all."

"Go on."

"The next morning I told them all — so I know and so she did."

"And, sir, I saw she was suffering, and I asked her if she had any thing to say for you, and she said, 'My love, all my earthly love — all that I love him to the last; but him I will love him in heaven.'"

"Oh!" he cried, bursting into tears, "oh, my wife — my wife!" and he wept as only he who knows it weeps — weeps when tears will no longer be repressed.

"It was four days after, when that she died, sir. Our neighbor was by the bed, the nurses, and the rest were standing about the room. 'I die,' said she, and she gave me a look out of those lying eyes, 'I die, but I am still your friend, promise me you will be a mother to me.' 'I will,' I said — 'I will,' I said, as well as I could for crying, for I thought my heart would break to pieces; and then she said again, 'Remember I got close to her lips, for I knew she was going as readily as the stars down, and my heart has and God is merciful — I said then to her, 'I am going — I am going,' and saying that to me, she put her arms round my lips, and said, 'That is all, sir.'"

"And then she died, sir. As she opened the door, a nurse, as if by accident, was laid in the hall. John, the porter, was striving to prevent the nurses of some person outside. Martha stepped to the door. A woman of dark aspect, apparently but obviously distressed, laid her hand firmly with one hand, holding that she must and would enter; and, with a vigorous movement, she entered her room within."

"I went to see the body, if I can't see the master," she said, looking at me with a mother, and pressed her forehead back further under her bonnet.

"Remembered woman," said Le Varen, "do you come to remember the death of death?" "Yes, sir — to see where you have laid her."

"And then," he said, the father woman would survey up the stairs, and then the chamber where lay the corpse. Surprised at her conduct, she turned to Le Varen, as she said with a low voice and hand is outstretched,

"I have walked since last Wednesday, that was, and taking no rest, and I am going to see you. You told me that she was dying, I know, and then she died — that was all I had to say. And then I in the morning, but your heart was so full, you told me I couldn't be so near the body." — and then, looking in the sight of his



almost writhing in pain, as with greedy eye. "Wasn't my white swan, Le Varen? Didn't she dash and crouch against the side of the woods of admiration, at the free glances? Did you ever see one of my tribe whose cheeks didn't burn if you but looked at her? Answer me — did the Indian need to get her virtue told you? Was I not taught her to stem the mother who had given her with all her care and love? Sadder! — sadder! — God knows your heart, this well-bounded — might power — there! you needn't call for any say to come and put me out — if I had a mind I could strangle you, and nobody the wiser; but I tell you, the Great Spirit will avenge the wrongs of my white swan — if He don't, I will."

She looked about at the stark Indian features of the men — she gazed long at the motherless form of the dead — she glanced again with a bitter smile toward the now prostrate Le Varen — and then left the chamber and the house.

The funeral solemnities were celebrated with great pomp — the body of the fair and gentle wife was laid in Le Varen's tomb, and the stricken man returned to his silent home, bowed and broken in spirit. He sat there, as he had sat all day, with the exception of the time taken in going to the graveyard. A maid the door attended him, and Martha entered, bringing Nick with her.

"Thank you, Martha, I feel better than I have lately," and as he looked upon at the boy's bright young face, a painful thought seemed to strike him; he shook his head impatiently — he bade Martha to go out, and after she had gone, bowed his head on his hand, taking no further notice of the child, who sat and looked up on a low seat, and sat in his old mother's way as the hours passed, till Le Varen, worn out with his gloomy thoughts, retired to rest taking Nick with him.

## CHAPTER VII.

PARK DINSMORE AND VAN ALSTYNE MEET MOTHER KATHLEEN —  
MORE CONCERNING CHIP.

VAN ALSTYNE and Park Dinmore arrived in the city at the same time with Le Varen, and proceeded, as usual, to the hotel. They returned, to the precincts of the post office, where SAT, the Irish serving woman, Gray, the country girl, and one of the prisoners, looking very badly about him, and appearing under an enormous pile of red-rimmed spectacles at all the post office. They found there the old man for a long time, by the name of David White, wearing a light neckcloth and superannuated broadcloth.

"I say, Gray, how are you, and how old are you? — well, well, is that so, and how are the boys and girls and the women?"



At this Park said before the slow old man had time to utter a word, and while helping Van Alstyne to his seat. Then he passed on himself, and struck the latter heartily but respectfully on the shoulder. By this time the latter had recovered his faculties sufficiently to reply to his queries, and the latter entered through the noisy streets, coming soon to the road leading into the open country. Beating the time by pleasant chat, and a vigorous enjoyment of the Autumn scenery, expressed by exuberant language, and a free, joyous laughter, the carriage in an hour rolled down by the beautiful Wissahickon, and then drew up before a stately mansion on the outskirts of Germantown. An avenue, lined by magnificent chestnut-trees, led to a smooth, level lawn, dotted with many trees.

Not far from the house the bold heights of surrounding hills, covered thickly with hemlock, spruce, and cedar, rose with quiet majesty, while lawns and parks covered the lesser slopes. The calm of a clear sky hung over all, and the great house looked almost solemn in the silence, surrounded as it was with heavily foliaged trees. Quiet trickled on the bosom of the misty silver stream; happy road led on the doomy lowlands, and on the sunbeams of the hills and fields and cottage homes.

Ascending wide, moss-covered steps of brown stone, the youth and his maturer friend entered the great door.

"This is my mother, Mr. Van Alstyne—a friend, mother, who has been traveling with me."

"You are very welcome," said the sweet-voiced, graceful lady, turning from her son's embrace with one white, outstretched hand to the professor.

"Now, Van Alstyne, come right up to my room; ah, I see your spectacles coming directly over those cautious glasses—mother, you can't think what a marvellous hunter, specimen-seeking creature he is!"

"My son, be respectful—he's a wild boy, Mr. Van Alstyne," she added, while a mother's pride shone in her eye.

The hall was very large, old-fashioned, and anciently furnished. The lights above each of the sides of the door were richly stained. Hunting pictures hung in the lower section, eyes of birds and steel of animals were mounted at different points. The staircase was broad, massive, and supported by a balustrade of heavy carved, the upper part of the hall was filled into gallery, ornamented with hunting pictures and roses, and surrounded with beautiful lattice-work, that took all the light from the gorgeously stained chamber window at the bottom of the staircase. From the gallery several rooms opened, and into one of these, small and richly furnished, Professor Van Alstyne was ushered by Park.

"Now, I will leave you till you are through with your talk," said the latter, "*ad revoir*."

"By the way, though the present of a title of honor is six years old, and though, I suppose, we have grown out of it, it will be worth our while."



It wanted yet two hours of twilight. The stars shone, big and clear, bright their nerves with the eddying wind, and a strong wind ruffled the bosom of the Wasthecon. For a while the road led along the banks of the river, keeping the rocky heights in view from the opposite side. Then from this path they diverged into long village-streets, now winding around the base of a mountain height, now down a narrow lane, and soon entering a wood, entered it though till they came to a spot of clearing, where withered leaves, straws, rags and ashes gave token of degraded humanity.

"Upon my word they are all gone," exclaimed Park, with an appearance of disgust: "there's where the tents were," he continued, pointing to different localities; "it's too bad, really; we've had our ride for nothing."

"Look here to the right, Dinsmore," said Van Alstyne, "do you see a smoke — there between these trees?"

Not far from them the ground sloped into a small hollow filled with bushes, and interspersed with young trees. From the center of this a smoke was ascending in thick coils. Moving curiously towards the place, Park looked down, and returning half way, for Van Alstyne had followed him, he whispered —

"It is old Mother Kurstman, as long as you know she has just cooked a ham, and now she's cooking the turkey, wouldn't you? Would you venture to invade her domestic sanctum?"

"Yes," replied Van Alstyne, "perhaps you can draw her out. What a strange man her nephew, that — he always seems treating some one with remorseless cruelty."

"Good-by, mother," said Park, as he was passing his way through the tangled undergrowth, "we are not to meet a little friendly talk with the Indians, but find them gone."

"Gone — gone, truly, gone — gone — forever!" murmured she, looking after the departing forms of the men, and slowly rising to her feet. "I say," continued she, "have you seen a child in your wanderings? I thought, you know, that perhaps you might have come home, scared to death, with some poor orphan; I have thought, as such things do occur sometimes — a small child with blue eyes and light hair," she added, with a tremor and rapid anxiety, as she looked from one fire to the other, "a little child that he'dn't have used to hardship, but then, oh! so tenderly, so tenderly brought up! Light as the first of dawn she was — I could see you go with her, but I feel her, you wouldn't have known that you had any thing in your arms at all."

"What child was it?" Park asked, still.

The dark eyes beamed and her face was turned to him; then filling her arms, she said, stolidly —

"That's none of your business! I saw such a child, and know such a child, and have seen a hundred more," she paused to control herself, then added, "I have seen a good many more of our Indians — gone native Wasthecons, I mean, and then," and she commenced singing in a plaintive tone:



“Dead and buried,  
Ocharoke,  
Under leaves  
Of pine and oak!  
Winds shall lull thee,  
Rivers run by thee,  
Birds fly over thee,  
Grass grow above thee;  
Flowers at the head,  
Arrow at the foot,  
Water for drink,  
For meat the root—  
Dead and buried,  
Ocharoke,  
Under leaves  
Of pine and oak.”

She hastened away, leaving the youth and the young professor thoughtful and quiet.

"Do you see how the weather has changed?" asked Van Alstyne, suddenly, pointing to the sky.

"Rain, rain, in torrents, is sure as you live; Mother Kars' can, they say, command the weather; for whenever she goes it rains!" cried Park, as the two remounted their horses.

"She is an idiotic servant of the weather-signs, I suppose," replied Van Aoyne; "you remember I predicted rain this noon; I wonder how I am doing now, about the skin, or whether I get wet to the skin."

[illegible]

"Certainly, Gray; but don't do it until you are out of the city; whoever it is, she will not stay in it a long time," said Mrs. Lawrence, rising to see Gray, and then she went down the street.

In the meantime he was seen with a girl, a figure leaning on his arm.

"Nothing! I shall explain it," said Mrs. Deane, proudly, "and I shall have done so in ten minutes. I shall not let them get right of me; I will show them that I am the wisest woman."

When the two were sitting on the sofa, the door was opened by the butler, reporting his first arrival. She was almost startled by the knock and entrance. As he passed, she saw Von Arnim, and, in spite of the calm and composed manner in which he bowed to her, she felt her heart throb, her eyes flash, and her hand clutch the hand railing. In a moment of time, however, she recovered herself, and, as she was assisted into the sitting-room, she fainted away.

"The King of the Forest," said the old man, "is a very old man; his  
 mind was sound when he was young. Why was this young







[illegible]

her tearful eyes, she was very happy; very thankful  
to get out of her chamber, and with a faint smile said her  
farewells to her friends around her; no more, and Miss  
Stanton, would have been tempted to turn out her into a  
cold street, had she seen the sweetest, almost brown-eyed girl,  
with her golden hair, and her warm, glowing cheeks, and her  
eyes so full of tears, and her face so pale, and her hands so cold;  
and she thought, "Well, my little girl, you must take care of  
yourself."

that proffered it, and faintly smiled.

[illegible][illegible]



"My little girl does not want to go back to her home in the cave, does she?" asked the doctor's wife, one day, kissing her affectionately.

Chip shook her head, but her eyes, now mournful, were filled with tears.

"You love me, don't you, Lena?" asked Mrs. Angell, as the child laid her head on her breast. An affirmative nod was the only answer, except that the little girl clung closer to her breast.

"Then what makes you so sad and silent, my child?"

"I don't know," was the mournful reply.

Solitude and austerity, combined with a system of intellectual culture, had almost done their work in the case of this poor child. Her imagination had grown morbid, her affections constricted, her manners irritable. She had little childish love of play; naturally, her mind had been nervous and vigorous, but had perished. But, thwarted and dispirited, it had fallen upon a sort of the level of a merely infantile capacity, and with the fancies of eleven years she had scarcely the endowments possessed usually by children of seven.

But the mind was there; Master Kaustenberg's well-trained and poetic delineations, terrible as they sometimes were, had yet taken upon rich soil. The old woman had taught her to read, by means of letters made on birch bark, and in a rude way, to draw, also. Still the doctor's wife was puzzled to know by what process to call out the instincts, the natural traits of this child. Toys did not interest her—conversation worried her—but the measured rhythm of poetry and music set her eyes sparkling, and pictures delighted her. Through these two channels the teacher would attempt to develop the resources of her now nearly narrowed intellect. With these keys she would unlock the imprisoned mind, and produce the fine jewels there worthy a gemmer's touch. Much she had learned the manner of imparting instruction, and the safety of over-indulgence. She must be accustomed to the childish company; her tastes and usual preferences must be skilfully managed, in order to aid in her development.

Established in their city home, the trading was put in progress. Masters were procured who were competent to invade the strengthening talent, if but the germ were there. Nor did the means fail of a result that far surpassed the expectations of the good doctor and his wife. The pale, thin little child grew blossoming and gay again, her body expanded as her mind, day by day, grew vigorous. She began to play games; and, at first—almost before she was five years old—It was evident that a trace of intellect had been hidden in the neglected soil—and by the use of the instruments thus begun to enter here and there beneath the surface. Her voice was late.

"She will certainly grow up," said the doctor to Mrs. Angell; "I never saw such an original."

Thus was it that the child, by the use of the instruments, the breadth and depth of her mind's resources. The doctor and his



wife were satisfied that God had given them so wonderful a mind to develop. Every day some new and brilliant gift became apparent. Which would she be? — a poet, painter, or singer? Already, when by herself, she improvised unusual airs. If she saw a striking picture or an engraving, she would often say —

“I feel as if I made that,” and then, with a solemn voice and look, she would add, “maybe I still do something like that, some day.”

The recitation of a poem would fill her with strange rapture. Her deep eyes grew luminous; her breath was suspended; her cheek red and flushed till when the book was laid by from the very pain of sympathy, and she would sit long afterwards, perhaps tearful and distressed. Gradually the memory of her earlier life grew less vivid, but she often sprang, sobbing, from her sleep, and then it required great tenderness and tact to soothe her.

But let me take my reader back to the time of the burial of Le Vaughn's wife.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FRIEND REBECCA COMFORTS LEOLINE.

“Can I walk there in three hours?”

She stood in the courtyard of the old Hantz house, on Arch street, as she sat with filled hands and drooping heart before the little grate. Over her taper lantern on the stool, a broken quivering candle light shone. The day, however cool, and the red hub of the little fire, threw its rosy red effluence in her face. It was hardly cold enough for a fire, but the room was tiny and large, and would have seemed empty without it. The occupant appeared to be a young girl of eighteen years, but in reality she was already past twenty-four. Dressed modestly, in a gray garb that encircled her slender throat and the shoulders of which were buttoned and fastened at the wrist. Her dark hair loosely thrown from her forehead, around which it stood in a wavy twirl like a coronet; the woman, so it might be called, of great grace of attitude, was calmly prepossessing. Her head cast in the passive posture and the thoughtful eye to tell, that young as she was, she had yet been much sorrowed. The very repose of her features, the smiling manner, the lips that never smiled, were sad. Her fingers — the little piano was closed, and it had not seemed to have been opened for several days. The books on the table drawn to the center of the room, were shut. Solitary and alone in the midst of a great, town-tossed London, sat the maiden as proud of John Leake, the Quaker preacher.

“Can I walk there in three hours?” she repeated, evidently



calculating the distance to some place outside the city limits — and then she added, “I will go to-morrow.”

There was a little tap on the door.

“Come in,” she said, just loudly enough to be heard, and then starting, exclaimed, “wait, I had forgotten.”

Taking a key from her pocket, she came toward the door and opened it. A tall figure in a drab cloak, the hood of which was drawn over her head, entered, and depositing a little lantern on the nearest chair, laid both hands on the brow of the younger, and drawing her forehead toward her, imprinted a kiss upon it.

“Mother hath been telling me of thy distressful trial,” said the Quaker-sister, seating herself, and then passing her hand over a forelock which was falling, and the rose which was not yet faded; then stooping back over her right arm, and taking it over respectfully under her own bare cap, she added, “do tell me at our tea, I had better eat and see thee, for he feared some harm had happened to thee.”

“Oh! Rebecca, I am very unhappy, very miserable, very wretched,” said the young woman, with quivering lip.

“If thee has no new trouble, thee is grieving the Spirit, dear child,” said the Quaker tenderly.

“But I have a new trouble, thou! Rebecca,” said the young woman, “or rather the old one has come up afresh — oh!” and she began to wipe the tears that streamed down her cheeks.

“Does, then, the sorrow of that poor babe affect thy heart?” asked the Quaker, looking, with a smile of sympathy in her voice.

“No, no, I feel no pang for the poor babe, but for his helplessness, though God has given to him his own strength, in the time of affliction. Mr. Le Vane has been dead in my memory; I had forgotten him — I hope I had,” she added, in a lower tone. “But, oh! Rebecca, I have found his poor mother, and I cannot get her to stop and I see her, and make no more attempt to obtain her forgiveness!”

“How did thee hear?”

“Casually, through one of the shop-girls. I know my poor mother very well, for she has gone to Germantown, where there is an encampment of Indians, to find — *his* child,” she said, and as she spoke. “They know nothing of it of course, but I am sure that the little girl lives and is somewhere still, and that my mother is searching for her. At my rate, she suspected these wandering Indians of having stolen it; the girls believed it to be a mere crazy freak. They made merry over her searching, her distress, but knowing how every word should lead to the heart. Rebecca, I must start to-morrow, and find my mother!”

“There is no d distance to walk to that,” said the Quaker, shaking her head, hesitating. “Thou had better let me speak to Rebecca, and —”

“Oh, no, no!” cried the young woman, breaking in upon her. “I don’t tell him; pray don’t; I only insist upon it. I must go alone, even if it depends upon my being left to act in my own way, and guided by my own impressions.”







the fire, that he had gone away from the city, and might not yet be returned.

"He is a comely young man," said Rebecca, quietly, "and he is returned, for brother came with him but yesterday morning — wouldst thou love him if he loved thee?"

The question was abruptly put; the young woman started, and the blood rushed, leaving her paler than before. She stood for a moment, irresolute, her lips apart, then suddenly covering her eyes with both hands, she dropped her head, exclaiming, in an anguished voice:

**"Don't ask me! don't ask me!"**

Rebecca stood in the lamplight, a sad smile resting on her lips, and her figure seeming unnaturally tall in the gloom. The room was quite silent, the fire-light threw uneven shadows over the spectral walls, and made the girl's figure look wavering as she stood there in confusion and distress.

"Thou shouldst not be afraid to love him," said Rebecca, holding her lantern to go, "there is as good as he — be happy my child; I wish thee a good night."

Moved by an impulse of tenderness, the lonely girl came forward, and throwing her arms over the neck of the Quakeress kissed her on either cheek.

"God bless thee, my child," said Rebecca, fervently, and drew her to her bosom; "about this journey, must it be as thee says?"

**"I shall go to-morrow,"** replied the other.

"God go with thee," repeated Rebecca, and left the room with a smile that made the heavy heart light. After preparing a few things for the morrow's journey, Leoline went into a little chamber adjoining, and with a sincere, heartfelt prayer, committing herself to God's care, retired to rest.

Perhaps the reader may ask how a woman of her youth and beauty came to live in a large, isolated, forsaken tenement. I can only reply that she had no rent to pay, that she earned her own living, and was ambitious to excel as a scholar; that many reasons, needless now to repeat, led her to seek solitude, and to shun the world around her. The old building was owned by Quaker John, who gave her privilege of occupying the most habitable part; his sister and herself lived only at the distance of a few squares, and the good Rebecca came in, sometimes, to cheer her solitude.

We have already seen Leoline upon a journey far too arduous for her strength, and prostrated at the house of Mrs. Dismore with a sudden fever. It was not to be wondered at that a creature so refined in manner and lovely in person should win the heart of that good lady forthwith. The sickness under which she labored gave rise to a series of conjectures which Mrs. Dismore was too delicately noble to express in words, for fear of wounding the feelings of her guest.

On the following day, Peck and the professor parted with many mutual regrets, the former promising to call on his next visit to the city, "when," said he, "my time is early as — this afternoon."







enchancing. By meadows and fields of late grain, rolling in glittering waves down the slopes of the hills, through patches of dark woods, the party drove, and ascending at last a gentle eminence, stopped upon a level stretch of tall-shed, where now and then one giant-oak stood like a giant of a king, crowned with the plumes of the rainbow. The children's line of an Indian summer tinged the view of heavens, and even the tents, ranged and adorned as they were, seemed the distance between them and the tents. Groups of Indians sat in the doors of the female institutions, and a few men and women, busy with their domestic duties, were busily seen in the distance, and many of the women looking toward the children's tent. They had not stirred as the party alighted and were waiting. The chief's tent was the largest, resting upon a base of wooden poles, and raised in front by tall poles that gave it the appearance of a little roof. The benches of the night-club were laid out in a row of deer-bark, pine-panels, and heads of the deer, and by the side of the benches, hanging over to the ground behind. The panel was strewed in front and within, on the mossy floor, gave an air of comfort to the interior, though it was somewhat cooled by a breeze with the smoke of the pipe.

Looking toward the children in every tent, he had only about to find some token of his mother's presence. Park, through his intention, obtained an entrance into the tent of the chief for the whole company. A narrow light, enlivened by the fire-light of the primitive that he, was shed all through the interior. On a bench of benches, over which was thrown a blanket, rested the chief, an elderly man of middle age and of commanding presence. His speech, an intelligent-looking woman, was pointing Indian even in her own language, but, obeying the simple state of her lord, she put down her work and taking his pipe, held it and presented it to him. With a gravity becoming his state, he held out the pipe to Park, who put it to his lips, then to the Quaker, next to Mrs. Danvers, and finally to Leoline, upon whom he seemed to look with as much admiration as an Indian allows himself to express. She, with shaking head and a trembling lip, just to hold the mouth-piece, and handed it back to him. Then came a long silence, in which the chief continued sitting, still with his eyes fixed on Leoline's face. The quiet moment was most memorable, and Leoline, by touching glasses, would first the Quaker, and then Park, to begin the conversation. Both, however, knew the etiquette of the Indian well to break the silence, and at last, blowing the smoke slowly upward, the chief exclaimed, in broken English —

“Me glad to see you.”

Upon this, Park rose from his position, and the two of them went out to the tent, each with a pipe in his mouth, and a small pipe in his hand. The latter took them up with a great deal of ceremony of some pleasure, and handed him a pipe of his own to each.

“Let us go round to the other tent,” said Leoline, “I can not bear this suspense.”



"They were pale-faced Indians for a starry squaw, who she thought was a white woman; do you know if the Indian people ever come to the Meadows?" asked Park, and bent forward to whisper to the girl, who had been so startled that shading his face, his hands fell over his knees.

1. The first of these is the fact that the Government has not been able to secure the necessary funds to carry out its policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of China.

“She Delaware Indian?”

color in her cheek and fire in her eye, — “is she here?”

"I am not a high school senior," said the chief. "I am a high school graduate — Master of the House," he added with great dignity.

... as he did so.

"What time did you see the strange black the-woman has been here, or is here?"

"Yes, yes," said the chief, looking the boys up to admire their various costumes. "The best — high, tall, — tall dresses — tall hats — cold — tell wet or dry."

"I don't know," answered the boy, growing pale again.

"Where is she now?" inquired Park, earnestly.

"Gone again," replied the chief, stolidly.

"Which way," asked Park, "further on, or back to Philadelphia?"

"Buck, buck," repeated the Indian, waving his hand impressively. "She cut plenty red lines to cure the pale-faces; she great woman — ugh?"

They could gather nothing more from this conference — and sick at heart, he like us, and they all went out together. Carle's group had gathered near the chief's tent, and were clamorous to know their laws and armaments, their religions, trees and hermits. Park offered a pretty bag to his mother.

"I have only six at home," she said, laughing.

[illegible]

"I don't want to sell my baby," she said. "I don't want to sell my baby."

There was something very deeply wrong, in the school-room with her mother. She had a strange conviction that she should meet her mother some day, but in the end hope had lent to her to son, and she said, sadly,



"I will go back to the city, and give up the search."

"Yea, for if Providence intends that thee shall find thy master, they will certainly do so," said the Quaker, "in His own good time. It might not do either thee or her good, if thee act now. Trust thou out thy faith in God."

## CHAPTER IX.

### A CONVERSAZIONE AT LE VAUGHN'S — AN UNEXPECTED REVELATION.

A year and six months had passed by. Le Vaughn, since the death of his wife, had eschewed all society, confining himself chiefly to his paternal duties. He was now an altered man. Severe physical and mental and moral discipline had made him, to all appearances, austere and reclusive. Silver hairs had begun to sprinkle in among his black, dark locks; the sockets of his eyes had widened and deepened, and his eyes seemed darker and heavier than in the years of his youth. He was alone in his great house, with Martha, his faithful house-keeper, a few under-servants, and Nick, who, already begun to show talents of no mean order. To Martha, with her neat, homely gown and plain cap, Nick looked up with becoming reverence. She had taught him his prayers, improved his habits, and kept a constant and anxious watch over all his actions. His little room was next to hers, and she almost felt a motherly love, that developed itself in various kind ways, and gave her a beauty, in the eyes of the boy, both mental and personal, that time might never efface. The little fellow had long had the benefit of the first teachers, and since Le Vaughn's return — who had to send him beyond the stream that his good nature was to endure — had received, and gone to lengths of their care, he had made rapid progress to the utmost satisfaction of his instructors and his father-father, who loved him with the intensity of a tender heart, dearly gifted of all that had made him dear.

Up to this time Le Vaughn, as we have said, had, since his wife's demise, eschewed all society; but at the request of a friend who had formed an association intended to combine friendly relations and literary amusement, he had consented to open his parlors that evening for their occupancy.

Le Vaughn at first intended to send his little Chip to his mother's room, as evening drew near, and the little creature was brought to the parlors, and there, for all the evening, his father and mother were seated in the comfortable glow, of the study and the study, and the study, and the study, Mrs. Robinson, who had come to see him, and Paul, who had come, accompanied by Van Alstyne and Miss Swan, the Quaker's daughter, looking as pure, as sweet, and plain as ever. As she entered, her eye roved round the room, and rested at last upon Nick, who sat











"I am not yet able to learn her name," replied one of the company.  
"She was introduced to me," remarked another, "as a friend  
of mine, Miss —; I really couldn't get the name. She is quite a  
personage, I believe — nobody knows her except the Deans, and,  
I should imagine, Van Alstyne."

A faint, sweet and powerful odor rising through the room. It was  
 burning sugar. Mr. Green, with his head bent over and looking on  
 his hand, at the heavy tread-lamps fell on by one, until, with a  
 sudden start, he passed round the table and faced him as if to say,  
 "Van Alstyne said I was a politician." There was no mistaking the  
 address, however, for the speaker's face was that of a general. "Ex-  
 cellent," said he, "if the nation be like, Mr. Wagner will not see a  
 thing of the kind, that would his heart is not so real Van Alstyne's  
 manner.

"I don't know, I might have been wrong," he thought,  
"but I am sure I might have been right. At least it is worth the trial."

Mr. Deane and his son after reaching a private house, only turned their eyes to the good Martha. He sat in a high-backed chair, while his friend seemed striving to comfort her.

"No, no, my dear, kind mother," exclaimed Louisa in tones of deep anguish, "I cannot, I cannot consent to this union. It has been the object of my life to meet the profane gaze of evil tongues who would have despised it. I never will be seen again as before, except in my own home. I am so situated that I shall never be happy in society. Let me go home, to my young girl, let me be true to my husband, the son of Queen Elizabeth's servant; I will ask nothing more. I shall never return to the world in this guise — you never told me," she added, with a flood of distress in the eyes of Mrs. Deane, "you told me that, if I could not do with, next to those who I respected, I might as well do with the worst; I was the ninth child born of a poor man, I must have been the worst — oh, why was this cross laid upon me?" she cried out in the anguish of her heart.

And I shall say to all nations that  
 I sorrow.

Mrs. Dinsmore quietly assisted her.

[illegible]

on.

"What is Mrs. [redacted]?" asked Louisa, in a low voice; "I thought she was to ride with us."



"No, Park made some other arrangement," replied Van Alstyne; "and I felt," he added rapidly, after a tremulous pause, "that I must unburden my soul to you this very night, Leoline —"

"Mrs. Swan, if you please," said the low, cold voice, though the whole figure had shrunk back, and rested throbbing against the side of the coach, dreading yet longing to hear the dear words that she would prevent — loving almost to a liberation, yet abandoned to despair.

"Leoline — I — beg your pardon — still — could I be so mistaken?"

"Perhaps you do not yet understand," said Leoline, in a low, cold voice, holding every motion in check as she spoke — "Mrs. Swan, the forewoman of John Lake's straw shop," she repeated, in an explanatory manner. "Had you not better return?"

"No, no; pardon me," he said, drawing yet half checking a heavy sigh; "I observed that you were at the assembly, in the early part of the evening," he added, endeavoring to assume a more cheerful voice; "but Miss Leoline — the young lady, I mean, for whom I addressed you, certainly came with Mrs. Dunscombe. It was really very awkward of me not to perceive — she is a pupil of mine," stammered Van Alstyne, remembering the passionate character of his attempted address.

"I am aware of that," said the cold voice.

"You are, — then I presume you know the young lady."

"I am acquainted with her," was the reply.

"In brief! Do you understand why she secludes herself from the world as she does? Has she parents? Is she a relative of friend Lake's? I have been told so."

"I cannot answer your question," said the voice, now slightly tremulous.

"Well, she is a wonder. You heard her sing to-night? Was not that a voice to be proud of? Ah, she is an angel?"

With what secret rapture did Leoline drink in these words, conveying as they did a greater depth and meaning than he intended for the forewoman's passionless ear! and still came the chilling thought, "Oh! if he *knows* would he speak thus?" and the old cruel distrust which she had nursed so many years, came winding down her heart like a cold stone. The coach had now stopped to inquire where he should leave the lady.

"At friend Lake's garden-gate," said Leoline, "I have the key and can let myself in."

The pale March moon threw a clear, vivid light over the still ranks of the streets, and the tall houses shone up like specters in the silver light. The leaves trembled and fell, settling upon the lowly benches against the white walls that marked the garden-ways; the snow had been melting all day, and the soft trickle of the water running down the streets, could be distinctly heard. Van Alstyne accompanied the forewoman to the Queen's garden-gate, saw her turn the key, both bade farewell, and he returned to his carriage. Leoline,



as she had the key in the inside, moved hastily up the yard and turning to the right came to an arched passage. Going through this she found herself in the rear of the old house in which nearly a century ago, as tradition said, a faithful by the name of Harry were buried. It was a dark, brick mansion, its windows covered with iron bars, and each cornered with heavy stone-work. It was a double door, except that through the three glass panes over the door leading into the further and rubbish-filled yard, shone a small but steady light. Entering this door Leslie looked in vain, and taking the little lamp from the floor, moved along the wide, smooth hall over which the beams were curved, ascended the first flight of stairs, and entered her own room, in the fireplace of which a few brands yet smoldered. There she sat down, dejected and selfishness, even with the sweet words to which she had listened, still ringing in her ears. "He does love me," she murmured, "loves me for my sake; and yet I must pain this great, good, noble heart and I must live ever after on the sweet remembrance of his affection."

The evening after the literary meeting took place at Mr. Le Vaughn's, he received a letter. It was nearly dusk before she left her shop, and quite dark when she had finished her daily errands, and sat down to her simple supper. The massive will which she had covered with the hints of a lady which she knew to be connected with Mr. Vaughn's circle, she seemed in no haste to open; and it was not until tea-time was elapsed, and she had brushed the shining hair, that she broke the seal and began to read the four pages of deeply written letter-paper. It was from Le Vaughn, pouring out his soul in confidence; confessing his sin, and praying for her forgiveness, and offering as the only reparation in his power, his heart, hand, and treasure, if she would but consent to accept them as tokens of his sorrow and repentance. Over one sentence she paused, and then she said—"Ours and I is within me; I have taken possession of my heart and my hand, to do what, to treat in all respects as I shall think my duty—to make the peace of my own lost child, and to find out where I am, I shall never know. You may know that he has been very unkind to me as long as my life, I have had him to be kind to me, and I have been very kind to him. Of strange visits and things I have thought about to my mind, ready to go anywhere, while I was traveling in search of my own lost little girl."

...and he was at the back entry, and did not







vehementness of her manner. The words that had been thronging to his lips remained unspeoken; but he did speak at last, and his voice was dry and husky, as he said,

"This, then, must be a final interview?"

“I know,” said the boy, with a finger to his throat.

"Then, dear child," he said, "the world is on its legs if they can get it so. — "You may go back, as a friend that I am not altogether unwelcome to you."

On the hill he had seen the will, leaping, throbbing pulsation of the great heart—distant and lost! But he could not. The hand lay cold and limp; and when, in that strange, lone, and cold doorway, with the head up in the air that had been and still was dead, in the very light of day to her vision. Dizzy, sick, and faint, Van Alstyne turned away. His temples throbbed, his eyes were dimly, and the sound of the sound leaped upon his heart. With a low cry he went to the door, groped down the dark staircase, and found a room where he had slept when he last had, and he went into the street. It was a cold, wet night. The wind rattled the signs, and there was a fine cutting rain on his face; there was a wetness on the sidewalk, an icy blackness overhead, the lights shone dimly here and there; black speckles, with umbrellas black, and a long line in the middle of the street, picking their cautious way with a strange, spook-like motion, and wherever the sound of mirth or melody drifted from some central group of home and happiness, it seemed as uncertain as laughter at a funeral.

## CHAPTER X.

**WEIGH CHIP IS RECOGNIZED BY THE INDIAN.**

[illegible]

lighted home interior. Mrs. Angell was the first to spring from his seat and welcome the visitor. Mrs. Angell and a maiden sister, with Mrs. Dilsmore



and Chip, who had been sitting by Park's side on the sofa, were the other inmates of this pleasant parlour. The doctor was absent on his professional visits, but Mrs. Angelo hoped would soon be in.

The keen eye of Mrs. Bliss caught this allusion to Van Alstyne's most secret thought. It told her that she had found the cause of his depression, and he must be suffering from a sense of duty that at any time she could have, and would, have perceived with the astuteness that she every day showed in every business transaction. Park was too much engaged with the case before him at this time to give much attention to his friend.

"Oh! she's the greatest little wonder alive," he exclaimed, aside, to the latter; "I'm just fascinated with her. Van Alst ne," he added, a few moments afterwards, with great seriousness, "I'm going to make her my wife."

"Nonsense!" said the professor, his cheek flushing and paling —  
"that child!"

"Yes, that child! Why not? By and by she'll not be a child. I'll get it soon revealed to me, and as sure as she lives and I live, I'll marry her."

Van Alstyne's goal, or tried to smile in his friend's face.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Angell, speaking quickly.

A red flower is thrust in at the open door, and holding it still ajar,  
the girl who stood there said,

" Indeed, Mrs. Angell, there's the queerest old man come to sell her's out in the kitchen, and he's dressed in the queerest sort of way, and he ses, 'can't he see the lady, and tell her fortune, or sing a song for her?' so I come to see."

Park burst into a hearty laugh, while the other's who sat,

"I don't know as I care about seeing him."

"Oh! Mrs. Angell, do let the man come in," said Paul; "I hate en fortune-tellers, don't you, little Lena?" he asked, kissing the nestling child.

"Let him come in if he is any way decent," said Mrs. Angell, and away went the maid.

Presently a tall, dark, bony, slender old man entered, with a woman's clock hanging from his shoulders, under which might be seen a long coat and breeches. A long, narrow, flat bag in his hand, he told her his name, and took his horse; and she asked that good old man, under which clock he carried a mass of sheep, straight from the mountains, and he told her a story of a man, who had a fine flock of sheep, and a fine dog, and a fine horse, and a fine wife, and a fine child, and a fine house, and a fine garden, and a fine everything, and a fine protector.

“I will, I will,” said the girl, and she went with Van Wagoner, as the place of the singing was not far from home. Van Wagoner had a long and weary journey, and he was the apparently good man — but when the latter said, turning to Mrs. Anne, “Shall I sing for you, lady? I have some little songs I sing for people who buy my horses,” he nodded his head to Park, and for a moment his sadness was merged in curiosity.



"Shall I sing, or shall I tell you a story? I tell stories, too, to amuse the ladies and gentlemen — yes, I'll tell you a story."

"Once," said the stranger, "in a little village, there was a man found a little bird. It was a poor little bird, and very old, and very weak, with only a few feathers — a very ugly-looking bird. The man took the bird to his house — the poor little bird, all old and decayed — and he got a heart to keep it, and he kept it, and he kept it all day long. Light came in on it, and he told it what to do, and he told it what to do, and the bird began to grow up. Little by little the feathers came, and the bird grew, and the color made the wings larger, and the bird began to sing and hop. Every day it grew bigger and lovelier, till it was the loveliest bird that ever was seen; and the man who found it wouldn't take — no, not thousands of dollars for it. But one day there came an eagle with a black feather in his wings, and when he saw this beautiful bird, he wanted it; and he wanted it fast — he wanted it — he — then," continued the stranger, his voice growing lower and deeper, "and one day he came with a great swoop, and caught the bird, and tore it all to pieces."

As he said this, the stranger turned, and, pointing to Chip, from whose hand the little bird had fled, cried, holding out his shaking, skinny fingers at the child:

"Look out for the bird — the eagle is coming!"

One quick, piercing shriek filled the room; the sensitive child lay in a death-like swoon, and as Mrs. Angell rushed toward her, with the rest, the stranger left the room.

Pale as a white lily, the poor little girl lay in her protector's arms, while Park knelt beside her, applying restoratives to her nostrils, and pressed the masses of brown hair back from her brow. Slowly returning to consciousness, at last Chip lifted her head and gazed about wildly, crying.

"Take me away! where is she?"

In vain the earnest, soothing tones of Park, and the quiet, loving pressure of the mother's arm. The eyes, the features, the gestures of the stranger were too strongly stamped upon her memory to be forgotten, and with a wild distress her kind father saw the work of tragedy on his own child's face. So young, so untroubled, and so pure — and yet so full of sorrow, it was plainly to be seen, was a picture of grief. And, with a gasp, Mrs. Angell, sitting down beside her young charge, placed her hand on her forehead. Her own eyes were full, her very heart grew cold at the recollection of the old man's story.

"A little bird, a poor little bird found by the roadside," she murmured, "and it grew so beautiful, and of great value — the loveliest bird that ever was seen — and this old man knew of it, and he wanted it! — Look out for the bird — the eagle is coming!"

And now the terror took possession of her heart as the world faded away from her vision, but she dared not give it voice, for Chip lay trembling on her heart.



Excusing herself, the doctor's wife led her charge out of the room, holding her with a strong grasp, to her own chamber, and there with prayer and sweet womanly encouragement, strove to soothe her to forgetfulness.

"Well, what do you think, Van Alstyne?" asked Park, as he accompanied the former to the door.

"Just as you do, I presume," said the professor, mildly.

"That was the old woman, Mother Kurstegan, as sure as you live."

"I know it," replied Van Alstyne.

"Why didn't we follow the old witch? Van Alstyne, this is a strange matter — the more I think of it, the more it perplexes me; why should she feel such a mad interest in this child? Let me whisper in your ear — little Lena is a foundling, and that Indian woman is Leoline's own mother!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the professor, a sullen light breaking in on his mind.

"Say nothing of it yet — they worship the child," murmured Park.

"And this crazed creature is the mother of Leoline!" thought Van Alstyne, as he strode on to his lodgings; "and can it be that she imagines a relation so unhappy would be any bar to my love? No, not if she were twice an outcast I would love her! I will not believe her answer false! I must hope, even against hope!"

The pretended man was, of course, no other than Mother Kurstegan. For a year she had wandered in this disguise through every part of the city, in rich men's houses, and the hovels of the poor, seeking her lost treasure. In every kitchen in which she was admitted, her skill in that all-telling hyponostry, won her a ready ear and a quick turn from the servants. If there were children in the family, she made a pretence that she could tell their future destiny by some sign of face and feature, and she seldom left any dwelling until she had accomplished the purpose for which she had entered it. On the night in question she had heard enough from the servants to recognize in the strange child, on whose peculiarities they were ready to dilate, Chip of the cave — and as she hurried down the Bond Street her heart bounded with a strange joy as she dwelt on the possibility of again possessing her, and so torturing the father's soul afresh. Pursuer in her walk at length, and being about to enter by the door that she was not followed, she pushed on to the lower part of the city, and disappeared among the gloomy buildings that lifted their tall fronts to the docks and the salmon river.

At twelve o'clock the storm had cleared away. The sun shone clear into the lanes, between the sides of a tall old house overlooking the harbour. A strong but gently cooling, crowding wind swept the wall, upon which lay a mossy turn. Tall turrets on the roof, and the walls were banners of dried herbs, and paper was scattered in fragments on the ground beneath and over the floor. An old clock



On the roomy front porch, a lamp of oil, the second to have been put out on the island, was lit — a man's hat stood on one of the chairs, and a small table, covered with a white cloth, on the other.

[illegible]

And then I got to the strange circle grade



ally forming about the moon. There was a faint red streak crossing its disk, and the gathering clouds, light as they were, took weird shape. The Indian's face shone with unnatural fire; her cheek-bones, more prominent than ever and long fists, seemed closing over her eyes; her hair cut short hung on her forehead, stiffly, and down along the temples. Her ankles and her feet were bare — and her hands crossed each other, clutching the much-worn emulet cloak. She stood there till the moonlight faded from the sky, and left the night to go out in darkness.

Le Vaughn was sitting in his sanctum the next morning, when Dr Angell hurriedly entered.

"You look flushed, my dear fellow," said Le Vaughn, offering a seat.

"Flushed, and well I may; I've been ever since three o'clock this morning on my feet; there are so many cases of fever, and they begin just as they did last year, in the vicinity of those untrained marshy tracts, which I'm afraid will be hot-beds of pestilence by the fall. I tell you we are in danger. There's the accumulation of a year's drainings in the wharf-shops, where the water is cut off from the current of the river; I was down with the physician of the hospital inspecting them to-day. What the result will be when the heat of July steams down over the mud and vegetable matter, and green slime, and rotten wood, and draws up the putrid gas to mix it with the atmosphere, God knows."

"The matter was discussed last fall," said Le Vaughn.

"I know it; and with what results? If ever the Scripture declaration was true of any people, it is of our Philadelphians, — 'they have malice in their hearts.' For three years I have been laboring to have them take hold of this matter. Our streets are pregnant with death; our very homes are full of the seeds of disease. I tell you, Le Vaughn, I won't live in Philadelphia after the first of August, if I could make one hundred dollars in gold every day; and I have an awfully solemn conviction that we are on the eve of some great calamity, which I believe will come in the shape of pestilence, if the people don't take this matter into consideration. We can't violate natural laws and nature, and escape the consequences."

"Write an article about this matter, and I'll publish it," said Le Vaughn.

"Certainly I will; but — excuse me, my friend." In stepping back, for he had arisen, he came in contact with a woman who had entered unnoticed, and was holding the door. The doctor's sudden exclamation caused Le Vaughn to look up, and to change color as he did so. Another woman began, in her faded bonnet and emulet cloak, with piercing eyes and erect figure, her lips pressed together, a look of fatigue rendering her countenance more repulsive, for she had slept none the preceding night, stood before him.

"Well!" said Le Vaughn, glancing uneasily towards the doctor



who, betrayed into surprise, was involuntarily studying the face of the woman. Dr. Ansel, bowing, immediately went out, and Le Vaughn gave evidence by the pulsar, by convulsive knitting of the brow, by an agitation of the arms and legs, and heaving of the breath, how burning her presence was for him. He tried to command his restlessness, but in vain — and, with a sigh, when he was at it again feeling, he requested her to seated.

"Never, in your presence," she exclaimed, with a restless eye. "I want money, and you must give me some. I am hungry! I can eat. Besides I have something to tell you, if you will give me money."

"Something to tell you" — that proved the open sesame to Le Vaughn's purse. His sternness melted: "Give me the truth concerning my child, and you shall never know want," he said, standing up close to her side, though she tried to shrink from him. "You shall live in my own house; sit by my fireside and be honored, and happy; and, listen," he continued — "I will make your daughter my wife, if she will marry me."

The Indian's eye blazed; her whole face kindled with indignation as she towered above her own tall stature, and flashed upon him a look of hate, scorn, defiance, loathing, — all concentrated in one scorching glare.

"Marry me," she exclaimed, in a choking voice. Then drawing her breath rather hastily, and the veins of her temples swelled almost to bursting, she repeated, "marry you! I'd burn her to death, as sure as there is a God in Heaven, if I thought she would stoop to marry you."

"Come, woman, stop this nonsense," said Le Vaughn hoarsely, angered in his turn; "it needs but a very little provocation to make me give you up to justice as a most abominable criminal, a child-stealer — murderer, for what I know."

The yell of laughter that rang from the Indian's throat, as she clapped her hands about her, was so shrill and unearthly, that it brought several of the men from the room adjoining to the door of the office.

"Hush! that woman," exclaimed Le Vaughn, shutting the door upon the curious faces. "Hush, how much money do you want? Take it and go; I am hell when you are by."

"We'll be there — mark my words — both of us. Oh!" she cried, with another crazed laugh, "how good I am there is a hell; how I am content you there! A hell! a hell!" she cried again — "Yes, there is a hell."

"Come, here is money," said Le Vaughn, now white as a sheet, thrusting forward several pieces of gold — "go, give it; if you want more, write, don't come near me again, it is best for you, best for me."

"Yes, this money looks handsome; it glitters; they needn't say pain trees don't grow in this country, for there's a golden palm," she said, her hand following a new vagary as she held out her







[illegible]

"What are you doing?" said Van Alstyne; "did any-body see it drive off?"

"You would never see him in a shop or at the corner; a half-pint of coffee, for example — that is, he couldn't see, of course, you know, but then, suddenly, jumped into the chaise and drove off; he came out of the shop, it wasn't a minute after he had gone in."

Van Alstyne.

"Well, don't, don't, you're doing me up!" exclaimed Park, turning to his friend, who, however, then suddenly starting up, he added, "I'm going to bed, as soon as the doctor is out of the house I'm in the moon — I was up all night, poor man. I had just given up the idea of going to bed, when Miss —" "Come to bed with us and take a nap — I have two chairs for you, you see — when the doctor comes, I'll get him to give you a dose of his 'wonderful' pills, you know, the best of them, the best of them, and all that." "Please don't let the doctor do for me, now; I'm not a child, and I can take care of myself, I know all they have to put me to — I've got more than the doctor and I have read with experience of the real effects of these pills. It's clear as day — I've got to be careful — that's all — a little crazy Indian has been."

"Hav'n't you seen Le Vaughn?"

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1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the President of the Senate, dated January 1, 1877. The letter is signed by Rutherford B. Hayes and is addressed to Charles Schreyer. The letter is a copy of a letter that was sent to the President of the Senate by the President of the United States.

On the evening of Oct. 3 at 11:30, Le Van ha had left the



city in his own chaise, to be present at a christening. As he rode along, and felt the cooler, sweeter breezes of the country air play upon his brow, his spirits revived. Nick was with him, full of wild glee, exulting in the ride, and in the pleasure of accompanying Le Vaughn.

"What do you get on the seat that way for, my son?" asked Le Vaughn, as the boy turned, and, hat-kneeling, looked through the square in the back of the chaise.

"To see if anybody's coming — oh! yes, there's a big cloud of dust — how heavy a horse must stop to make so much dust — great clouds! our little gray doesn't, she travels beautifully! guess the folks are in a hurry — there, that's Doctor Angell's great brown horse, I declare! And there's Lena — yes, sitting way back; I guess doctor's taking her out to ride; he let me have a *grand* ride — my horse before yesterday. Whew! they're coming fast — father, there's the doctor and Lena; let's stop 'em and speak to 'em."

"The doctor! who, where?" said Le Vaughn, abstractedly, as Nick turned round in order to lean out of the carriage. No sooner had he attained this position, than the other shot by like an arrow, while Nick cried out at the top of his voice, "I say, doctor! stop — it's us."

Away went the chaise as if a demon held the reins, and a faint cry came back upon the still air as it dashed ahead.

"You must be mistaken, my son," said Le Vaughn, increasing his own speed.

"No! I'm sure it was her, but the doctor had a handkerchief tied over his hat, and it fell almost to his chin; and she did scream, didn't she? I'm sure it was Lena, father."

"Strange!" said Le Vaughn, absently; "the doctor may have been called on some case of life and death; yes, the child certainly did scream — perhaps she laughed because the old brown beat my gray."

"I rather think so," replied Nick; "but at any rate it was Lena, and she looked frightened. You don't think the horse is running away, father?"

Le Vaughn's face expressed some concern as he gazed along the road, and saw the chaise still dashing on. "Oh, no," he replied, lightly, "Dr. Angell knows too well how to manage a horse for that — still —" Nick looked at him anxiously, and the two watched the rapidly-vanishing cloud, till a turn in the road hid it from sight, and then Le Vaughn added, "I guess they're safe enough." But a strange uneasiness possessed him; his thoughts would follow the chaise, the doctor with a handkerchief over his face, and the shout or shriek that had caught his ear as they passed. At every opening he would stretch forward, and to Nick's "Do you see them, father?" answer, "Oh, no! I didn't expect to," although it was evident, from his strained and nervous glances, and his occasional exclamations of — "They must have gone that way!" or, "They must have turned that road," that he still dwelt anxiously upon the circumstance.

It was forgotten, however, amid the gaiety of the evening, but re-occurred again while they were returning in the fresh and golden calm of a June morning.



Arriving in town, and leaving Nick at the house, Le Vaughn drove slowly to his office. Strangely enough, the memory of the last morning-ride that he had taken nearly two years ago, came back vividly to his mind. He remembered with what solemn forebodings he had moved from street to street; the terrible and unwelcome news that met him at his own door-stone, the sad days and months that had passed over his head since then, filled up with no great or good or happy or bad days. He stopped before the dingy door of his office, and, without a moment's delay, ran hastily upstairs. Park Dinsmore and Van Alstyne were just that moment leaving. Struck with their haggard faces, he paused with one foot on the threshold, looking inquiringly at them.

"We have something to communicate to you," Park said, at last, retreating backward into the office, and Le Vaughn, mute, fearful, and pale, followed them, until the three stood round his desk.

"Doctor Angell has lost his little girl," said the professor.

"Heaven's!" exclaimed Le Vaughn, "when did she die?"

"She is not dead," returned Van Alstyne; "she is stolen."

"Ha!" cried Le Vaughn, the incident of yesterday striking sharply on his recollection. "I had forgotten it entirely; I declare it had come to my mind!" he said, vaguely, looking at them.

They returned his look, not being able to comprehend him.

"They passed us, yesterday; yesterday, in the afternoon, near four o'clock — right on our road, and we after them, and it never occurred to me that there was any thing wrong."

Park listened — his agitation was extreme; he stood there white and almost nerveless.

"Did you see them?" he asked. "Oh, can it be possible? Near them — so near, and let them escape?"

"My dear boy, I was totally in the dark about it. I am now; sit down and tell me, and command me to the utmost; I pledge you my word I am the last man to turn away from following after a stolen child;" and a quick shade of anguish crossed his features.

"We have more to tell you," said Van Alstyne, reluctantly, while Park sat and hunched a little back from the desk, and turned his face the other way. "Circumstances have transpired that lead us to believe that — that — in fact, the child whom we all love and look upon with an ordinary interest, is not in reality the daughter of Doctor and Mrs. Angell."

"What?" exclaimed Le Vaughn, excitedly; "my God! whose is she, then? tell me — tell me. I beg your pardon; my sudden impression misleads me — go on;" and forsaken of all his strength he sank back in his seat.

"The child is a foundling," continued Park, who, at the first violent gesture had sprung back to them; "she was taken from the roadside some seven miles from Goodale's inn, among the hills there, and the circumstances under which she was discovered, tend to show that she had been grossly neglected. For two years Mrs. Angell has been developing her mental faculties, which seemed before entirely



dominant. She could get no clue to the former situation of the child except that — she said she had lived — you will let her me say, sir.

“I will, I will!” exclaimed Le Vaughn, with desperate eagerness, clenching at the sides of his chair till his hands were purple with the effort; “only tell me one thing; do they suspect who stole the child?”

“They do.”

Le Vaughn breathed hard, and sat with painful and fixed look as he uttered, under his voice —

“Who?”

“An Indian woman who has been prowling about here for several years!”

“Madness!” burst from the blue lips of Le Vaughn; “and she came within my grasp! My child — my darling, my motherless babe. Good God! I am fate’s football!”

The tone was so heart-broken — the words so pitiful, that Van Alstyne turned away to hide his tears. The strong man stood, weak and swaying now, like a reed bent by the tempest. The knowledge that he had touched the hand, the lips, the shaven locks of his own dear child — that he had gazed at her with feelings he could neither fathom nor define; that her innocent voice had been heard in his own house; that her heart had beat, once, close to his own — and that now she was borne away, Heaven only knew whither; the knowledge of so much unimagined bliss, making his agony terrible and awful, nearly overbore his reason, and he stood with a fixed and almost vacant stare, gazing into space. It was but for a moment. With swelling nostrils and flashing eyes, he leaped out of his trance.

“I’ll find her, if it costs me my life,” was all he said, and he rushed from the office.

Officers were sent in all directions after the lost child. The doctor searched unceasingly, giving his business entirely over to his colleagues for the time. Mrs. Arnold suffered more perhaps than any one else; her intimate knowledge of the child’s habits, anticipations, and extraordinary sensitiveness, making her more keenly and distressingly alive to the threatened misadventures and dangers to which in all probability she would be subjected. She could hardly eat or sleep during the time the search lasted. Le Vaughn with the doctor took the same road he had traveled before, and by dint of constant inquiry and indefatigable patience, traced the pair to a tavern twenty miles from the city. Strangely enough the first person that greeted the doctor was the relict of Mrs. Seckels in, with bare arms and dress tucked up, bustling about in a very ready way.

“Dear me, doctor, yes, ‘tis so!” she exclaimed, in hearty response to his expressions of surprise, “and you may be sure I can’t get nothing to do more than I ever had with nine children and a great house like this to keep on my hands; so I went and died and left no child in the world, poor woman. I expect he’s better off, but I don’t, I can tell you. I sent the doctor, and he has not chance to keep



tavern, and so here I be. A man and a little girl — why, yes, a man or a woman I don't rightly know which, for he looked like one and she like t'other. A horse and chaise — wa! that's what they come in, and she, I mean he, took the girl out and brought her in, and it really made me a-dying to look at the poor dumb thing. She made me think of that same poor critter that you took off, doctor — what ever did become of her?"

"That's the same child we are looking for," said the doctor, gravely.

"Good gracious — mercy — patience — laws!" exclaimed Mrs. Snackskin, holding up her hands, and then depositing them upon her capacious hips; "you don't say! Why this one was a reg'lar little wax doll, and the other was a rag-baby."

"We can't lose a minute," said the doctor, smiling in spite of himself at the comparison; "tell us which way they went and at just what time."

"Well, I was going to say that the fellow, if she was a fellow, went into a room, and came out again presently with the child, my sakes! you should a seen her! why, she was that changed I'd say you to know her, even you the fellow of it as it were. I couldn't see no hair — one great ball was tied across her forehead, another under her chin, just for on the world as if she was a live corpse."

Le Vaughn staggered against the wall.

"Is the gentleman sick?" asked the garrulous Mrs. Snackskin — "what's the matter with him?" and on receiving a negative she went on — "then, see, put the scared thing into the chaise, and tied her — tied all up, or more or — saying it's a he — rumbly humbly, and off they rode, just ten minutes after four o'clock; and so that's all I know, but that there's the road they took; and I reckon you won't find 'em if you go ever so right smart."

When a long hour they followed the indicated route. It was now ten o'clock, a warm, somewhat lowering day. They rode on in silence, stopping at every tavern, and almost every habitation. Some large ones they passed at such a time; it was flying very fast, and the horses seemed sweating freely. At last they came into a tract of wild land. The ground had evidently been trampled very recently, for through a thicket nearly in the heart of the pine woods, they saw well worn wheel-ruts that the horse stretched, and the wheels were caught by projecting roots and stumps, whose stout arms almost closed up the path.

"I don't see how we can make any progress here," said the doctor, "and still the old witch has managed to get my horse through, for the tracks continue. I have an idea that if we leave the horse here and go on foot, we shall find us well, if not better; we are fresh and the horse is not."

Le Vaughn assented, and they, afflicted and surprised though they were, dismounted. A light was kindled, and the doctor, with a lantern, and a gun, and a bag of powder, went on ahead, and in every way made his way, straight for Aunt's place. Led by Chip's pretty little hat-



her dress throughout, except shoes and stockings, and the hat that had probably been worn by the Indian woman. Le Vaughn groaned as the eyes of both gentlemen met.

"The horse is gone," said Doctor Angell, looking about.

"And has been since last night," added Le Vaughn; "probably she is sixty miles from here. She took the horse and retraced her steps from this spot, but where next she went, Heaven only knows!"

"I tell you it's going to be a hard chase," said the doctor. "Now we have this clue, we had better return and hire some Indian hunters; perhaps they can track her from this very spot."

"Keep on now, for the sake of mercy!" exclaimed Le Vaughn, anxiously; "let us at least spend to-day in the search. We can find Indians in the village beyond, who will aid us."

The day waxed and waned; another and another followed and closed and no success; the wily Indian had eluded them all. Little did they dream that with the wonderful cunning of insanity, the crazed creature had slipped back into the city in the dead of night, sought her miserable quarters, and there, in her old disguise, successfully eluded all discovery, while the horse, left to himself, walked quietly to his stable, and was there found by his owner. With the money she had obtained from Le Vaughn, and which really was a considerable amount, Mother Kurstegan had bought furniture for the old room overlooking the river, and bestowed some pains upon its arrangement; so that but for its size and heavy unpapered walls, it would have looked quite comfortable. As it was, in the early summer the prospect from the window was admirable. The Delaware, with its moving panorama, the ever-moving ships, the constant passing of vehicles, the tree-covered island in the middle of the river, the wide prospect of sky and distant highlands of the surrounding country, made a pleasant look-out. Hither was Chip carried, almost helpless from a fever, on the night of the day on which she had been stolen. The house was inhabited, room by room, by separate families, all foreigners, who could not even speak a word of the English language. Among them, for the time, Mother Kurstegan was safe. She had procured a key for the entrance, and in the dead of night led the unsuspecting child up flight after flight of stairs, until at last she arrived at her own chamber. Here the moon shone in, and Chip stood in the center of the room, looking about her with an expression almost vacant, so hopeless was it. There she stood, silent, the big tears beginning to roll down her cheeks, while Mother Kurstegan waited death to strike a light. She put her hands up to her face that had been trained to creep over her neck in beautiful and shining rings. The curls were gone. She looked at the face that had ever been an object of terror to her, and her little heart grew cold. But the treachery of the twenty months that had rolled so swiftly past had not been without their benefit. She had overcome, in some degree, the fear of the supernatural, and this trial was needed to strengthen in her the habit of self-dependence that had but recently begun to spring up in her hitherto helpless nature. In the few



moments that she stood there, she grew rapidly older. Why she had been thus ruthlessly snatched from all the endearments of her beloved home, she could not fathom; but that she had not been carried to the thick woods or the lonely hills, was a matter of gratitude. That she was in the city, she knew; for at the end of the country road, Master Kestegut had dismounted her from the horse, saying, "now you are here, be happy and live as you like," and then they had walked through the shadows of the trees, steadily gained the lower part of the city next to the docks, and thence to this new, unusual house. A light was struck, clipping the soft, pale moon-rays, and Master Kestegut, placing it on a table, surveyed her shrinking victim with satisfaction.

"Do you know me, Chip?" at last she said.

"Yes," replied the child, endeavoring to return her glance with steadiness; "are you going to kill me?"

"No, little girl," returned the old woman, shuddering as she spoke; "but I am going to keep you with me for a while, to learn you how to talk before me. I won't let you move out, nor stir out, nor see the first living person, except from these windows. If you'll be quiet, and won't give me any trouble, I won't harm you; but if you disobey me in one particular, I'll carry you off and give you to the Indians; hear that. You see how nicely I can manage," she added, with an insane laugh; "how cleverly I got you here, when, I suppose, not less than a hundred persons are on the search for you and me."

The child's face brightened; they had caught her here before many days; she would try to have patience; to wait in peace as far as she could, and as she prepared to lie down in the little bed pointed out to her, weary and foot-sore as she was, it was a comfort to feel that those she loved were searching for her. Before she lay down, she knelt, as she had been taught, and ardently repeated her prayers, mingled with tears, for she missed the soft hand that had rested on her head, the tender smile, the fervent kiss. The Indian woman, pretending not to look, was yet saddened at the sight, and as she came to the words, "O Lord, wilt Thou bless all my dear friends who love me, my father, my mother, and Aunt Eunice; and wilt Thou bless all my enemies, if I have any, and those who do not love me; wilt Thou keep me from all danger this night, and help me to fear nothing but to do wrong," a look of terror crossed her face; she felt, for an instant, that there was a power beyond hers, revolute as was her will, and as vile as was her hatred.

## CHAPTER XII.

### SICK AND IN PRISON.

LE VAREN had altered his will, or rather made a new one, in favor of his daughter, if she should be found within ten years. For many







Bill's face at the sight of his bel, but he had been so overpowered by the first sight of his enemy, that he could not do otherwise.

"Specially 'lves 'em, then," he murmured — "come here, my little fellow. Martha, bring him here."

[illegible][illegible]



evenings the old woman taught her to embroider with beads, and to make many curious ornaments of Indian craft. The walls, white and bare, were covered with sketches in charcoal, which the child gathered from the burnt embers after their meals were over. Sometimes Mother Kurstegan would draw an Indian warrior, with arrow outstretched and feathered crown, and sometimes the child, gathering her subjects from the beautiful prospect of cloud, sky, and river, would decorate them with true skill. The little girl had become accustomed to her home. She thought of the past, she loved to speak of Park Dismore, and wondered if he missed his "little bird." She could talk freely of him to the old Indian, for Park had shown the latter a kindness at the old man's fireside that she had never forgotten.

The first of August came. The mellow light of a setting sun flooded the harbor, and streamed in through the coarse and tattered curtains that had been hung across the windows to keep out the hot daylight. But now the blinds were thrown back, the old curtains looped to one side by Chip's skilful fingers, the great room was clean, a gentle breeze rustled through, and Chip sat alone, a little back from the open window, nursing her beautiful violets, when a thundering knock at the door startled her. She sprung breathlessly to her feet, the blood rushed from her face even to her lips; perhaps the doctor had found her; and with a regret and a great hope that mingled and shot through her heart like lightning, she stood uncertain what to do. Again the knock, louder, more impatient. There was no way of entering; Mother Kurstegan had the key, and she had promised, with solemn words, that terrified her to repeat, that she would never speak or betray her presence by a sign. Her resolution had almost given way, when a German voice shouted from below — the man at the door answered in German, and the person moved on knocking at another door. Chip sat down and cried, and so the Indian found her.

"What! some one came — and did you speak?" she said in accents of terror, her black eyes flashing fire.

"No, no, I was still," said the girl, shrieking back.

"Ah! but you thought some one had come for you; you hoped they would break in the door, tear down the house and carry you away; I know you did."

Chip was silent; she had hoped they would break down the door, but not tear down the house.

"And that after I have brought you these," exclaimed the excited woman, pointing to a bundle, "books, beautiful books, and a box full of colors and brushes, and pictures, and plenty of fine paper, that I risked my very life to buy, and that cost me all I have earned — oh!" she cried, turning away with anguished face, "how can I love her so, and she his child?"

"I am very sorry," said Chip, her face brightening at the enumeration of so many things she had longed for, "I — I don't think — if — if I could see Park sometimes I — I feel very bad."

"You would like to see him! poor child, it is a pity if he should die of the fever, that you couldn't see him just once; what are you sobbing for, what are you trembling for?"



"Park is sick with the fever and going to die," cried the child with unaccountable English; "you said so."

"No, he isn't sick any more — he's bent; he's not sick; he's well, in his own mother's house; and hark, sometime I'll carry you there. Now be quiet and look at those beautiful things. Are you very sure that if you saw Park you would be happy here?"

"Oh! yes, yes, I know I should!" exclaimed Chip.

"Well, I'll see, perhaps she'll come on an eagle sometime, and spring into the window." The child jumped; her vivid imagination had been on the picture, and she turned to the window as if to catch a glimpse of the outstretched wings, or the handsome face of her friend. The Indian smiled her wild laugh, and for some moments, sitting down on the floor, looking her arms about her knees, her mind wandered. By and by she sprang up, went toward Chip, and encircling her with both arms, she said with earnestness, "You're a pretty creature!" Chip flushed, and she stood quiet hardly knowing how to receive the attention of her Indian captor. "Your curls have grown since then," remarked the Indian, pulling at the short wings that hid her eyes from golden tresses; "take off the cap." Very gladly Chip untied the dark cotton covering which she had worn daily, and at last the roses, soft roses on her cheeks.

"I don't like your beauty, sweet child, ever since I heard you pray that last night. I meant to cut your hair off close; I meant to marry you," she said, shuddering as she spoke, "with the tattoo marks — cut I can't cut," and she added, solemnly, "there is a higher power than mine. It's been no wonder mine that spared you."

Chip still gazed at her vaguely.

"You don't like these clothes, do you?" continued the woman, pointing to the half-shirt, breeches, and that hang loosely on the upper part of the child's body, and the Indian leggings, rudely made, and Indian moccasins under them.

Chip shook her head. The woman raised a moment, her features grew softer, and a human tenderness mastered her eyes with tears. "I will," she muttered, then added, alert, "I'll get you some better clothes, and you shall go with me and see Park. Le Vaughn is sick on his bed, the doctor's wife out of town, and nobody would know me in these clothes; — she shall see him, though I must get her grace first. Come, we'll have some supper."

Since Chip's abduction, the old woman had dressed in deep mourning, with a black veil over her face. The dress she had purchased of a traveling Jew, and none would suspect the straight, dark woman, in her plaid cap and deep black bonnet, to be the abolitionist whose name had been for years a terror in the city. The horrible meal was spread — the supper eaten, and the remains cleared away. As twilight came on, the atmosphere grew more oppressive.

"There'll be a good many cases to-night," remarked the Indian, turning to the woman; "how this hot blast will take them off. And if the folk would eat sparrow, or drink beer, they could save themselves. Well, when Doctor Rush, and Doctor Angell, and the



rest of the great physicians get sick, I guess I'll go to doctoring. Ha! I might make money; I wonder if Le Vaughn's got the fever?"

She looked down; Chip's eyes were fastened on her face.

"What fever?" she asked.

"Oh, you don't know any thing about it; look at the flies over the river — what swarms! chills like gray smoke — a bad sign, go away from the window, child; this air is poison for you!"

"Shall I light a candle?" asked the little girl, moving toward the hearth.

"Yes, yes — what chills!" she added, to herself. "Filled with thunder, and no signs of rain! Fough! how the river smells! The pools, too, the water at the wharf, covered with thick green stuff; anybody might know a fever would come. What! you've got to be out! pretty thing! shall I show you how the Indians paint?"

"Yes," replied Chip, with some of her old tremor, and Mother Kums-see put her face with brown and red and white, and laughed like a boy. Chip stepped backward with a little fear, and the Indian sprang after her, but desisted as, with a scream of real terror, the child clung up her hands.

"It's nothing, child; here, I'll wipe it all off; there, now; take your paper and your brushes and make a pretty picture."

"I don't feel like it," said Chip, sadly; "my head aches."

"What!" cried the Indian, catching hold of the child's hands, which had grown hot, "have I frightened you so? Poor little Chip! poor little nothing! there," and holding her close to her breast, she asked, "does your head ache now?"

"Yes, dreadfully," replied Chip, with a tearful, mournful manner.

"No, it don't — no, no; I tell you it *don't* ache; now, see here; your head is as cool as a plantain leaf; look at me; you haven't the least sign of a headache — it's imagination.

Chip shook her head.

"It aches everywhere," she said, with emphasis.

The Indian, with changed manner, sat back and looked at the child. "Then it's all over," she murmured; "she'll die and leave me, just because I care for her; if I hated her she'd live forever!"

"When will you take me to Park?" asked Chip, eagerly, and she lifted her eyes, heavy and red, as she very faintly added, "and you take me there to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes, if I don't take you to your grave instead," murmured the Indian to herself, and drawing Chip to her side, she took her pulse, laid her hand over her forehead, and speaking up she murmured: "I must get water and heat it."

Taking a large tin pail in one hand, and throwing a shawl over her head with the other, she went out, locking the door after her; and Chip sat down upon her little bed, groaning with pain. Presently the Indian returned, and in a few minutes, carrying a small quantity of water on a bowl, washed her face and her hot ears. Finding this one she washed, which contained dried spices, herbs, and tongs, and threw a handful into the water, and watched it as it boiled.



"Water!" cried Chip, pressing herself; "oh, if I could only see Park! May I, to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes," replied the Indian, holding the dipper to her lips.

"And my mother and my father?"

"Yes, yes, if you don't meet 'em in heaven."

"Oh, how I should like to go! If I could only be a bird and fly there!" she murmured, drowsily.

"Oh, it's coming the worst way!" cried the Indian, stooping above her, and noting the painful flash on her eyes, and the darkening color of her lips; "she mustn't sleep!" and hastening back to the fire, she took off the preparation, poured it into an earthen bowl, and carried it to the bedside. Its strong odor filled the room, and the Indian, watching the child, crept and scooped until she drank the potion, and sank back quietly upon her bed. That night, long after the midnight hours were gone, an anxious watcher sat in the great, lonely room. The candle flared on the mantel, making grotesque the shadowings of the fair little hand along the walls. The box of bright colors lay open on the little table, sheets of paper, filen on the floor, were scattered about in confusion, and now, dropping her head on her weary, aching breast, even listening to Chip's hoarse breathing, and watching the red spot of fever deepen or fade on her cheeks, the Indian woman kept her fatal vigil. Chip looked radiant as she lay in the lamplight. Her brow, her neck, her limbs appeared a transparent whiteness, and her hair lay tossed in short, loose waves on the dingy coverlet. With her, all was silent, but lights flared along the streets from window to window; in almost every house there was a light; and the hot, stifling, murky atmosphere fell down over the whole city like a pall.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### RECONCILIATION.

"What shall I do to-day, doctor?" asked the Quaker's forewoman of Doctor A. G. as she met him at the door of his office.

"Oh, go to the hospital," he said hastily, filling a tumbler as he stood on the threshold, and as she went no longer his large girl look, though he was related to a Quaker family — "a gentle reminder, my wife has been here a week. Thank God! I am again a father," and he drew his hand across his eyes; then remembering that she had

asked — "Oh, I'll be as usual to-day, looking up and down the list, trying to get some good things for poor Mr. Vernon's down, with a little more of the same sort of thing. Ah! it's a fearful thing, this fever, I tell you, and it's killing many the best."

"Is there no other place?" asked the forewoman, shrinking and turning away — "no sick women or children?"



"Yes, plenty, but they all of them have some little help, whereas poor Le Vaughn, and Van Alstyne —"

"Van Alstyne!" exclaimed the Quaker's forewoman, a look of consternation spreading over her face — her cheek crimsoning, her hands pressed hard against her heart — "did you say Mr. Van Alstyne had the fever?" she asked in a low, choking voice.

"Yes," replied Doctor Angell, too much engrossed with his own thoughts to heed her agitation — "we will walk along," he added, "or I shall be besieged with misery — yes, Le Vaughn and Van Alstyne are both sick in the same house. Van Alstyne's landlady died last week, since which time the professor has made his home at Le Vaughn's. If either of them die, it will be a great loss to the community, and I have little hope," he sighed as he spoke, looking thoughtfully, longingly toward the sky. The leaves were shriveled, and fell as the doctor and his friend walked underneath the rows of mournful trees, and their feet ground them to powder; there seemed no shadow over any thing — houses, streets — sky, all glaring — bright with a fierce metallic brightness. They moved hurriedly along, past block after block, deserted, ghostly in their isolation from life: past street after street, mighty mansions of silence with the mold of the plague gathered upon them. The dead cart rattled by; the sound of its wheels smote upon the heart — so rapid, so business-like it was — jolt, jolt, rumble, rumble, now a laugh from the hardened official who held the reins — now a startling silence, broken by that shout that has fallen upon but few living ears. "Bring out your dead."

Ledine held her emotions in subservience to her powerful will as much as her strength would permit — and yet, oh! what a deadly furtiveness crept over her very soul as she thought of Van Alstyne, sick, suffering — perhaps dying. Even Le Vaughn's illness struck the chords of her sympathy, and wakened a thrill of pity. She knew of Nick's safety — she thought of him with all the love a mother can feel who has never known what it was to press a babe to her bosom, and she *had* known — ay! drunk to the dregs the cup of desertion and deception — whose mingled bitterness had nearly changed her nature, and destroyed her reason.

"At this house, a woman and three children are ill," said the doctor, pausing before a small frame tenement — "what! you will go on — I am glad of it; for there is a good old black woman here — but the others are destitute." Nothing more was spoken till they reached Le Vaughn's house. The front door stood open — there were marks of disorder in the hall — a noise as of some one wrestling in the parlor — and there indeed was Le Vaughn with his wife's portrait in one hand, battling with the black man and threatening to kill him if he did not leave the house.

At sight of Ledine, though he did not know her, his frenzy was calmed, and he submitted, reeling and staggering like a drunken man, to be carried up-stairs, where he sat on the side of his bed, but could not be compelled to lie down. What a sight here met the gaze! The splendid mirrors were dashed to atoms, the furniture



broken and defaced in every conceivable manner — the windows held but the sharp and jagged fragments of glass, and the most dire confusion prevailed.

"It is not often that the fever takes this turn," whispered Doctor Angell to Leanne, who stood right in the midst of the destruction, "it would not be safe to leave you here."

"Van Alstyne," murmured Leanne — and this time the passion that ran through her veins and trembled in the clasp of her hand did not escape the doctor. He dared not move from Leanne, so he beckoned his servant who stood out of the sick man's sight, to show her the way, while he prepared an anodyne for his patient. He led her to the next chamber, having locked the door between the two rooms, for the greater safety of Van Alstyne, and she stood beside the heavily curtained bed.

"He's just the other way," whispered the black, who yet panted from the effect of Leanne's crazy violence; "but I thinks much more worse;" and he pushed aside the curtain.

"Oh, how white! how deathly pale!" murmured Leanne, gazing with an agonised look, "are you — are he lives?"

The black touched the pale hand lying apparently lifeless on the sunny bed-spread; a slight movement showed that there was yet life. Leanne knelt and touched the still hand with her lips, murmuring, as the hot tears filled her eyes:

"I may lose you surely, now — and you so near God!"

"Is there any hope?" cried Doctor Angell! this — these scenes — they — are too terrible!" and her woman's heart gave way — she sank back with a heavy sob, and the tears fell like rain over her face.

"I told you they would be too much for you, my dear friend," said the doctor, gently; "you had better not stay; both of these cases are hopeless — the one especially so. Poor Van Alstyne! he is in the stage that precedes death — he must die!"

With one wild shriek Leanne fell on her knees at the doctor's feet.

"Save him! save him!" she cried, with wild emphasis, "look at me!" She tore off the cap and the band of gray hair, her own locks falling about her shoulders; "I am not old — you see me as I am in my woman's love and weakness, we love each other — I *can not* give up! doctor, will you save him?"

The doctor stood for a moment stupidly gazing down at the suppliant at his feet, so agonised, so beautiful! The transformation was striking and complete; then he looked toward the sick bed, saying as he pointed:

"You have saved him — see!"

The black's sword was standing in great drops on the forehead of the sick man — but Leanne had raised him even from that ominous slumber, and he opened his eyes, and he looked at her with some awe.

"I am so glad to see you," said the doctor, bending instantly above Van Alstyne. "You are better my friend," he whispered low and softly; "the fever is gone — you may soon be well again."

"Where is she?" faintly murmured Van Alstyne, and a faint smile hovered around his lips.



"Near you — watching you; he has got the worst is over."

"Leoline," murmured the pale woman, softly; "Leoline!"

"Give him those medicines," said the old Ansell; "keep him quiet. I hope we may see him one of these days. We shall know whether he is a good one or a bad one, shall we?" he added, making a faint attempt at a smile; but seeing the tears and the pangs of Leoline, he turned, only to cry; "You had better remove your Quaker garb —"

"Soberly, I am, sister, wants to say you, I mean," said the black man, who called for the remainder of his share to be drawn.

The doctor hurried down — Jake the new barber, stood just inside the hall, holding a tin, with, possibly, yet beautiful little girl by the hand, and making a dozen awkward obeisances. Catching the child in his arms, the doctor held her to his heart, exclaiming:

"Little Lamb! why, my little lamb, where have you been?"

The child lay slumbering on his shoulder, he turned an inquiring glance toward Jake.

"Why, it was one of the walking ones, you know — though it struck me all in a heap, and she looked so respectable; I didn't see Mother Knutson in these two years — might be more — but thank I, as I saw a well-dressed, shrewd-looking woman standing alone, that's a walking one; and I said to myself, when I came to look in her face, it was her, Mother Knutson, the old Indian carrier, and no mistake! Says I, 'You seem a little darkin'?' Says she, 'O God, be merciful! kind enough as I be, thinkin' of her later end, may be.' Says I, 'O Mother, you're taken with the fever.' Says she, 'Though your eyes be shut to 'em, they had be washed white as milk; O God, be merciful!' and then she fainted. I laid her out, and she told me where she lived — so I lifted one of the cabs, and drove, and I happened to be almost empty, and had her carried home. Well, there I found this child."

"Is the old woman dead?"

"Yes, and buried by this time," replied the tenant, with a stolid indifference.

"Poor Leoline!" murmured the doctor. "How came you to know where to bring my sweet lamb?"

"Why, bless you, I don't exactly know about the child and where it was," responded Jake, tracing his fingers through his red hair; "it's the very circumstance that she kept up in that hole in the country, I expect, for a week. I took her home to Mary — that's my wife — and she said she'd be glad to have her."

"Thank you — thank you," murmured the doctor, drawing the golden-haired girl close, and pressing her to his heart; and passing the pale child to his bosom, he summoned Leoline.

"Faint!" she murmured, looking up at her doctor's, her cheeks very pale, she murmured faintly, "my mother!"

"Don't say a word more," he said, and upon the surgeon's, trying to turn away his face, "I don't — and I don't mean to!"

"She called you," said Chip, in a low tone.







eyes — he had just recovered from a fearful spasm; the most horrible and revolting features of the fever had marked his case — too horrible to be recorded, and he lay now, weak, helpless, his eyes almost starting from their sockets, and swimming in blood. He felt the pressure of the doctor's hand.

"Am I going?" he asked, feebly.

"You must die, Le Vaughn," said the doctor, solemnly. "Have you any directions to give? Shall I send for a minister — or shall I pray for you?"

The dying man was silent — a little tremor on the upper lip, the yellow teeth closing over it, and leaving their imprint in blood — a groan — and he said:

"I would commend my poor child to you, doctor, but she is dead — carried away in that frightful pest-cart."

His voice failed him, and great drops rolled down his sunken cheeks. The doctor, accustomed as he was to sights of misery, wept like a child, and then, in a broken voice, he said:

"Le Vaughn, my dear friend, you are dying, and what I have to say, may hasten your death; but if I can give you one momentary joy before you enter the eternal world — let me say, your daughter is living — is found — is here —" he caught the dying man who, in delirious joy, half sprung from his bed, and trembling in every limb, his features working spasmodically, could hardly articulate — "Quick — quick!"

"But lie quietly, or she must not see you — you shall speak to her, bless her. — But do not frighten the child. Come here, darling;" and taking the pale, shrinking creature within the curtain, he whispered, "smile, love — put your hand in his hand — say, Father." The child did all that was required with a wonderful composure. Le Vaughn began moaning like a little infant, and grieving and sobbing, though his exhausted frame would hardly bear the motion of anguish.

"Shall I pray for you, Le Vaughn?" asked the doctor.

"Let me die, let me die," was his only response.

"Do you feel prepared to enter the presence of your Maker?" continued the doctor.

"Let me die — let me die," he repeated, still moaning and sobbing and grieving. Notwithstanding, the doctor knelt down and offered a prayer, beseeching the Heavens to forgive the dying man for His Son's sake. When he rose all was still, and poor little Chip's hand lay within that of a corpse.

It was near the dawn of another sultry day. Leoline, fatigued with watching, sat near a little table on which flickered a taper, almost burnt out. With one hand she shaded her weary eyes, and with the other grasped a book that had been her solace through the sad hours of the desolate night — the Bible. Chip lay near the door, on a little bed made up on the floor, sleeping soundly. A voice roused Leoline, who still retained her Quaker dress; it said — "It is



line; I must rise. She sprung to the bed, and whispered — "Not yet — not yet."

"I've slept beyond my usual hour," replied Van Alstyne. "Why?" he exclaimed, in a tone of the deepest consternation; "how is this? I can not move — I am chilled; am I sleeping still?"

"You have been very sick, and it is weakness," murmured Leoline, softly.

"Who are you?"

"I am Quaker John's firewoman," replied the soft voice, after a pause.

"Where am I?" he interrogated.

"In the house of Mr. Le Vaughn."

"Oh! I remember, Le Vaughn was sick — wasn't he? Has he got about yet?"

"He — has — gone — out," replied Leoline; with feigned composure.

"I am glad; they need him very much at the office. Is the fever raging still in the city? — over in Philadelphia, you know, I mean —" he asked, as if laboring under some confusion of intellect — "over in the city, in Philadelphia, I mean."

"It is not yet quite settled," she answered, hearing, as she spoke, the dull rattle of the dead-carts that traversed the streets almost constantly.

"Has any body been here to inquire after me?" he asked, a moment after. "Have any letters come? I ought not to be lying here; and yet, only think how weak I am!"

"Dr. Allen has been here frequently," replied his watcher, falteringly; "and — and a lady whom you know — Miss Leoline —"

"Oh! has she? has she?" exclaimed Van Alstyne, breaking in upon her — a light shining from his pallid face; "then she has not had the fever!"

"No; and she is very anxious for your recovery," added Leoline, in a trembling whisper.

"Is she? Well, that is so kind! so sweet in her. I thought she had forgotten me; I am glad I have been sick. God bless her," he repeated, fervently, more than once. Leoline turned away, affected inexpressibly. "Did you say there were letters?" he asked, after a long pause.

"Yes; the doctor brought one from Germantown," replied Leoline.

"Oh! that is from Park — my dear friend." After a little silence, he murmured, "I wish I could hear it."

"Shall I read it to you?" asked Leoline.

"Oh! if you please," he said, smiling faintly; "but stop, it is not sealed with black?"

"Not the seal is a beautiful crimson," said Leoline, breaking it, her heart swelling with love and joy.

"How much your voice reminds me —" murmured Van Alstyne, his words sunk into a whisper.

The gray shadows were melting into a soft, yet uncertain light. as



Leoline prepared to read. She trimmed another lamp, and changing her voice slightly, she commenced as follows:

"MY DEAR VAN ALSTYNE: No letter from you this week, and I am almost all with apprehension. I have done every thing to divert my mind from the fears attendant upon your silence. Your letters reach me — or, in fact, my letters address them (and not a very few and drearily far letters — they come), under a large flat stone which I call Grandfather's altar, about half a mile from here. There we keep a furnace of charcoal, a pot of vinegar, a tin full of tar, and the house-keeper knows what else; and our fumigating scenes are inexpressibly funny, for there never was such a scared old fellow as our butler. He takes a pair of the longest and oldest-fashioned tongs to be had in town (they belong to old Squire Hatchings), and he picks the letters up one by one, and holds them over the tar and over charcoal, till I get so impatient, I should like to hold him over them by the same means, and then dips the letters in vinegar, which come up all dripping, and in a very questionable state of despatch. I have not accompanied him this morning, on purpose to write to you; six times I have run to the window, even while writing these few lines, and your boy comes our old man, and — no letter from you. Alas, alas! what can the matter be? but I *will* not think you are sick — oh, Van Alstyne, why did you not come out here with us? Come now; fly to this sweet retreat. The autumn woods are beautiful — ripe pomegranates hang on our trees, and blushing apples; the bee-hives and the wheelers stand in solid pyramid from the base to the point of our splendid hill, just opposite the house; the magnolias still blossom, their snow-like goblets beaming with beauty; oh, Van Alstyne, why are you not here? I could not sleep last night for thinking of you. I have a strange story to tell. One night last week — I think it was Monday — I was called out from the sitting-room. A woman in black met me in the garden. I was fearful of infection, but when she lifted her veil, displaying the features of Mother Kunstegan I forgot all peril. Of course, my first question was of Lena."

The voice of the reader failed — but with a strong effort she conquered her emotion, and continued:

"I have brought her here, and you shall see her on two conditions," she said. "First, you are to ask no questions — second, you are not to detain her a moment beyond my pleasure; if you do, so sure will I bring the plague upon you." Her eyes burned redly; her face (it was now a handsome one) was full of fire; I did feel a momentary dread of the woman, but my heart was yearning to see my little father, and I persisted. She was gone but five minutes — she brought Lena, but oh, Van Alstyne what a change! Mournful, pale, trembling, her great eyes swimming in tears she seemed afraid to let fall."

"Don't read if it troubles you," murmured the weak voice behind the curtains.

He did not see the struggles for composure — the heaving chest, the







did not prevent her mind from dwelling on the perils to which her husband, by his noble devotion to humanity, exposed his life daily. But when she received him as from the mouth of the grave, leaned once more upon his bosom, and felt the blessed thrill of his fervent kiss, the anguish of the past was all forgotten. And Chip! how she welcomed her! How she thanked God, with tears and fervency, that the peculiar suffering to which she had been exposed was forever past! Chip lay sobbing and laughing within the arms that so tenderly supported her; her haven was reached — a sacred home! There were the books she loved — the beautiful poets who had stirred her nature, till rapture turned to pain; there was the new pianoforte the doctor had bought especially for her. There was her own table with its many drawers, in which her colors, her own choice stock of stationery, her pretty silver-headed pencils, her store of exquisite engravings, all lay as if she had put them back but yesterday, and after a night's refreshing sleep had returned to them again; and then wonder of wonders! there was in the cradle the greatest gift and blessing of all — a miracle of infantile grace and loveliness — a babe who should be hers to fondle and caress. Chip's cup of joy was full. The day was a thousand times brighter because the night had been so dark and stormy, and like a young eagle that has learned to rest upon its own outspread pinions, her soul soared exultingly in this home atmosphere.

Park Dinsmore flattered between Germantown and Quaker John's homestead, spending alternate days in each: Martha and Nick were again established in their wonted dwelling, for Le Vaughn had provided nobly for his faithful domestic, and made arrangements for her still to occupy the home she had loved so long, till the boy Nick should grow to manhood. The whole estate, bank funds, and shares, stock, and interest in the paper, went into the hands of Van Alstyne, who was appointed in trust for the two children, and to whom a liberal salary was secured, thus placing him far above want.

One bright morning, early in the ensuing spring, a carriage drove up to the door of Quaker John; a rustle of heavy silks sounded in the hall. Le Vaughn had returned from a long visit at Mrs. Dinsmore's; she still wore her disguise, but the gray hair, the sunken, trilled lip, and the patches upon her cheeks, could not conceal the joy that irradiated her whole face.

The Quaker had invited "a company" to his house that day, including Martha and her charge, Doctor Angell and his wife, with Chip. The doctor came, bringing the sweet little girl, who, freed from apprehension, had grown wonderfully beautiful. Van Alstyne was there, still pale, for some hidden sorrow weighed down his heart, and now and then the Quaker's brown man appeared for a few moments, but seemed to be busily engaged. In quiet converse the hours wore away.

"Will you wait out?" asked Park Dinsmore of Van Alstyne.

"With pleasure," and they passed from the house together.

"I am so glad you have got the professorship in Yale," said Park after a short silence; "but you seem to be noways elated."



"I am happy at the prospect of still being with you," replied Van Alstyne, smiling a little sadly; "but, to tell the truth, no news gives me much joy."

"Van Alstyne, what makes you so gloomy?" inquired Park, taking his friend's arm. "Is it the loss of poor Le Vaughn, or any dear friend? is it your ill-health? It grieves me to see you so."

Van Alstyne did not answer; they were just turning the corner where stood the old Hantz house.

"See; the door is open," said Park, touching it with his finger; "let's go in, nobody lives here now."

Van Alstyne gladly acceded. A secret longing to enter and look in silence and loneliness upon the walls within which he had spent the golden hours of his life, had more than once possessed him. For Leoline's strange silence he could not account; since his sickness she had been invisible, and even Quaker John, when appealed to, waived the subject and bade him wait, so he had waited till patience was gone, and the gloom of doubt had made him at last, desponding and unhappy. They had ascended the stairs — gained the room to which Van Alstyne led the way, when a low murmur arrested the attention of both. The manner in which the open door stood, enabled them to see the Quaker's forewoman upon her knees, one arm about the boy Nick, talking fondly and earnestly to him, while he, with red cheeks and a boyish bashfulness, gazed in her face. The voice was low — the words were undistinguishable, but they seemed to leap from a passionate and long-smothered love. She pressed back his locks, and gently kissed him on the forehead — then, as if she could no longer restrain her feelings, caught him to her bosom, and rained kisses upon his brow, cheek, and lips, before he could disengage himself from her embrace. Suddenly starting at sounds of a footstep, she sprang to her feet, and with a voice of alarm, "Who is there?"

Park retreated, but Van Alstyne, whispering, "We will not seem to be listeners," advanced, saying, "I beg your pardon, madam, we came up to look over the old house, never for a moment imagining we should find it occupied."

The woman had grown pale; she calmly accepted his apology, and still was silent.

"Pardon me, madam," Van Alstyne said, again approaching her with much agitation; "will you not give me some information concerning the lady who formerly occupied these rooms? I promise you, in the honor of a gentleman, I will not abuse your confidence; it is of great importance that I should see her before I leave the city — perhaps never to return."

"You shall see her," murmured Leoline, turning to go in the little room adjoining, and shutting the door.

Van Alstyne grew white.

"What does it mean?" whispered Park. "If it *should* be?" and he started as the thought broke upon him; "amazement! what if the Quaker's forewoman should be Leoline, after all?"

The door opened again, and it was Leoline's self who entered, pale, sweetly beautiful, garbed in black, and advancing toward Van Alstyne



said : " No longer the Quaker's forewoman, but simply Leoline, now and forever."

Van Alstyne clasped her outstretched hand in both of his, but his great emotion would not let him speak.

Park stood by, bashful, yet smiling, as many past occurrences, meetings, and gatherings rushed through his mind. At last Van Alstyne broke the silence, exclaiming :

" Can it be possible? *Can* transformation be so complete? Leoline, you astonish me. I am bewildered beyond expression. I believe it impossible —"

" For women to keep secrets?" suggested Park, roguishly.

" No — I did not mean — I was not going to say that; but then the skill! the admirable self-possession — I am just astounded — but so happy! so very happy."

" Perhaps," said Leoline, checking his rapture, " we had all better return to the house; it is chilly here. Come," and she held out her hand to Nick, who, apparently fascinated with the beautiful woman, put his hand confidently within her clasp.

" I am his guardian," whispered Van Alstyne, impulsively (Park had hurried on before them); then noting the flush and extreme emotion of his new-found love, he added : " Dearest, you are as holy in my eyes as an angel. Forget the past — I could not live without you — I should have died, Leoline."

She gave him one grateful look; tears were in her eyes, tears of rapture, of perfect happiness. She had found rest. She had tried him — his patience — his truth — his nobleness — and he was great in all. This atoned for the cloud that had ever rested on her life. She entered the parlor, modestly clinging to Van Alstyne's arm.

" I see — it's all right," said the doctor.

" Well she is a splendid woman!" said Park; " and now, Van Alstyne, you'll be married, and settle down; and I'm going to college, to stay four years — then shall return — marry Lena — she'll be sixteen, and we're engaged," he added, demurely; " sure as you live," he continued, seeing a smile on the face of the professor; " Lena's little, but she knows enough to love me."

We look into the handsome cottage on the outskirts of the city, to take a last glance at Masty's honest features, as she sits in her own " boughten " home; and we see the homely inn, where the wife and baby of bald-headed Job are still crying in concert — and catch a glimpse of the redoubtable Snackskin, hanging out her clothes, as she shouts in shrill treble :

" I ain't got nothin' to do — no, nothin' in the world."



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